



SUSTAINING AMERICA'S FISHERIES FOR THE FUTURE ACT

What Supporters are Saying about the Sustaining America's Fisheries for the Future Act

Linda Behnken, Executive Director, Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association:

“Representative Huffman’s bill reflects broad stakeholder input and a deep commitment to the bipartisan MSA tradition. The bill acknowledges that climate change must now be central to all management decisions, and that our fisheries and fishing communities depend on careful stewardship of essential fish habitat, reducing bycatch, and responding quickly to changing ocean conditions. ALFA appreciates Representative Huffman’s leadership and we look forward to working with him and our Alaska delegation to navigate the challenges facing our fisheries and fishing communities.”

John Pappalardo, Chief Executive Officer of Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance:

“Commercial fishing has changed a lot in 15 years, and we are thankful Chairman Huffman listened to industry members across the country to find out what changes in the preeminent fisheries legislation would benefit fish, fishermen and the ocean ecosystem. We are pleased to see that many of our members concerns, including greater accountability, further emphasis on science, a robust framework to meet the challenges of climate change and a funding stream to protect the working waterfronts that are a crucial part of the economy – and a vital, healthy, sustainable, delicious food supply – were included.”

Eric Brazer, Deputy Director of the Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders Alliance:

“Chairman Huffman came to the Gulf of Mexico and heard loud and clear that commercial fishermen care about the health of our oceans, the integrity of the scientific process, the need for fair and balanced stakeholder participation, the pride we take in sustainability, and our obligation to accountability. Our oceans may be dynamic, but the core tenets of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act are not – strong, credible science; accountability for all; adherence to catch limits; and a seat at the table for proactive commercial fishermen that are interested in real solutions. We thank Chairman Huffman for his commitment to these priorities and the men and women who go to sea every day to support their families and feed this nation, and we look forward to continuing to work with him on this bill.”

Robert Vandermark, Executive Director, Marine Fish Conservation Network: “The Magnuson-Stevens Act is essential to maintaining and improving the long-term health and productivity of our nation’s marine ecosystems, ocean fisheries, and coastal fishing communities. We thank Chairman Jared Huffman for engaging stakeholders in the law’s reauthorization process through his two-year, bipartisan listening tour seeking expertise and knowledge from people around the country who depend on ocean resources for their livelihoods and recreation. We look forward to working with the Chairman to

continue the law's legacy of success ensuring that our oceans and those who rely on them can successfully meet the emerging challenges of the future."

Captain Lucas Bissett, Executive Director, American Fly Fishing Trade

Association: "Congressman Huffman's focus on stakeholder engagement through this process makes me feel confident that this Magnuson-Stevens Act Reauthorization will continue the tradition of being a bi-partisan process. In fact, I was part of that stakeholder engagement when I sat in on a listening session held in New Orleans, La. I witnessed first-hand representatives from all sectors getting an opportunity to weigh-in during these meetings. As the Executive Director of the American Fly Fishing Trade Association I commend Congressman Huffman's focus on keeping our federal fisheries sustainable and adaptable because our industries' small businesses rely on them to feed their families and help stimulate our economy."

Willy Goldsmith, Executive Director, American Saltwater Guides Association:

"The Magnuson-Stevens Act has successfully recovered numerous species over the past several decades, and this bill provides much-needed updates to the law that will help ensure a bright future for our marine fisheries and the businesses that depend on them," said Willy Goldsmith, Executive Director of the American Saltwater Guides Association. "By enhancing protections for habitat and forage fish, tightening requirements for rebuilding stocks, and better integrating climate change considerations into management, this bill builds on improvements to the law made in previous reauthorization efforts. The emphasis on improving recreational catch data, including by integrating data from multiple sources, will help ensure that management decisions are based on the best available information from our sector. We are grateful to Congressman Huffman for his efforts to further strengthen federal fisheries management following his extensive engagement with stakeholders to hear their diverse needs and perspectives."

Rob Kramer, President, Wild Oceans: "At Wild Oceans, we've always looked at ocean ecosystem health from the perspective of both predator and prey, advocating for a holistic, ecosystem-based approach to managing fisheries. The goal was always to build a healthier and more resilient ocean. Chairman Huffman's bill for the first time addresses the effects of climate change on our fisheries by incorporating climate science and adaptation strategies into management decisions. By investing in science that supports ecosystem-based fishery management and giving managers the tools they need to act with precaution in the face of uncertainty, this bill will help preserve the integrity of our ocean ecosystems and sustain fishing opportunities for future generations."

Bob Rees, Executive Director, Northwest Guides and Anglers Association: "If there's anything west coast fishermen have learned in recent years, it's that our ocean and forage fish populations are highly volatile. Building a resilient future for our coastal ports and securing sound management practices that benefit our forage fish prey base will ensure a future for anglers who are focused on saltwater fisheries more now than ever before. Congressman Huffman is shepherding forward a collaborative approach to

the reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act in a way that ensures all voices are heard, just as the original authors intended.”

Hannah Heimbuch, Executive Director, Under Sixty Cod Harvesters, Lifelong Alaskan Commercial Fisherman: "The Under Sixty Cod Harvesters represents vessels working year-round to harvest food in some of the planet's harshest maritime conditions. Our businesses and crews rely on strong federal fisheries policies that focus on the long-term sustainability of our fishery resources, coastal communities and marine ecosystems. We are grateful for the hard work done in Congress to build a stable future for our seafood-dependent businesses, our ocean livelihoods, and the local-to-global food security we provide. USCH extends a particular thank you to Congressman Huffman for the introduction of this Magnuson reauthorization bill, and look forward to working with his office, and our esteemed Alaskan delegation, in the months and years to come.

“In an age of shifting stocks and climate, of evolving modern technology allowing for the ongoing improvement of accountability measures and scientific practices, it is crucial that we take these opportunities to reassess our management practices. The introduction of this bill heralds a time for rich discussion around our working waterfronts, our expectations for stability and accountability within our management plans, and the resilience of our food systems and ocean businesses in the face of social and environmental change. We have an opportunity to bolster rebuilding plans and bycatch reduction, to improve considerations for fishing dependent communities, and to further ensure habitat protections that sustain our iconic fishery species. A global leader in fisheries management, America is up to this task, seeking ongoing excellence in management as we respond to lessons learned and challenges ahead.”

Earthjustice, National Audubon Society, Natural Resources Defense Council, Oceana, Ocean Conservancy and The Pew Charitable Trusts: “The Magnuson-Stevens Act provides the bedrock foundation for sustainably managing our marine fisheries. The Sustaining America’s Fisheries for the Future Act is a tremendous step forward in building resilient fisheries and coastal economies.

“From destructive climate disruptions, to declining fish populations, our fisheries are facing unprecedented challenges that warrant bold action. This legislation takes a science-based approach and provides new tools that will help us tackle the biggest threats to our nation’s fisheries and the communities that rely on them.

“We appreciate Congressmen Huffman and Case’s strong leadership and commitment to prioritizing these much-needed improvements.”

Marissa Wilson, Executive Director of Alaska Marine Conservation Council: "The Alaska Marine Conservation Council welcomes the introduction of a draft reauthorization of America's fisheries management and conservation law — the Magnuson Stevens Act. AMCC is a conservation-focused organization representing the coastal communities and independent fishermen spanning Alaska's vast coastline. We

extend a sincere thank you to Representative Huffman for his leadership in connecting with diverse stakeholders across the nation and for advancing key updates within the law — incorporating an ongoing high standard of science-based management, evolving impacts of climate change, and important issues of indigenous representation on management bodies.

“Within MSA and other legislation, AMCC supports conservation solutions that address the interdependence between healthy marine ecosystems, strong local economies and coastal traditions, partially addressed in this bill through a focus on climate considerations and working waterfronts. We strongly support the draft's inclusion of two designated tribal seats on the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council. This is a crucial step to restoring equity in representation for Alaskans and makes progress toward recognizing millennia of Alaska Native leadership in the harvest and stewarding of the North Pacific's rich marine resources.

“In addition, AMCC appreciates and supports the amended language focused on reducing fishery bycatch. Bycatch impacts the ecological well-being of the marine environment and other user groups dependent on the bycaught species. The removal of the language ‘to the extent practicable’ provides a strengthened directive to reduce bycatch.

“AMCC supports advancements to promote the long-term health of the nation’s fisheries and fishing communities with many vital management updates and inclusion of climate-ready fisheries language. By strengthening the well-being of coastal communities and responsible resource management we can ensure that our oceans and the people that rely on them can thrive for generations to come.”

Kevin Scribner, Founder, Forever Wild Seafood: "Reauthorizing the Magnuson-Stevens Act is long overdue, especially now with climate change nipping at its heels, and Congressman Huffman's bill is worth the wait. It is a good first step toward creating more resilient fisheries and long-term sustainability of fish populations and our national fishing traditions, and thereby maintaining the spirit of the MSA."

Melanie Bahnke, President, Kawerak, Inc.: “Our Tribes are stewards of our oceans, and we are not merely users of resources, but intimately connected and part of the ecosystem in the Bering Sea. Our oceans and our people are facing unprecedented threats due to climate change and bycatch. The Magnuson-Stevens Act needs an update, and this bill provides critical solutions to these emergencies. Most importantly, for the first time, this bill specifically acknowledges the importance of subsistence fishing and adds Tribal representation to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, giving our Tribes a long overdue seat at the decision-making table. Kawerak supports this bill and we are grateful for the co-sponsors recognition of the unique government to government relationship the United States of America has with federally recognized Tribes.”

Amos Philemonoff, Sr., President, Aleut Community of St. Paul Island: “The Aleut Community of St. Paul Island supports this bill, which makes meaningful and necessary updates to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. We have long voiced our concerns to federal and state fishery managers about the need to update the MSA, as the impacts of climate change and bycatch degrade our ecosystem and threaten our commercial and subsistence fisheries. We are encouraged that this bill provides for two voting seats for our Tribes on the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, giving us a much-needed voice in the decision-making process. We thank Congressman Huffman for his leadership in addressing these important issues.”

Jacob Merculief, Mayor of Saint Paul and Saint Paul Tribe Councilmember: “On behalf of Saint Paul, I greatly appreciate the bill’s proposal in Section 205 to add the participation of fishing communities as a requirement for limited access programs. Communities are often an afterthought in fisheries-management even though, unlike other fishery participants, they are unable to adapt or relocate in response to shifts in fishery resources. By enhancing the effectiveness of the Section 303A tools in the MSA and council process, the Sustaining America’s Fisheries for the Future Act more closely aligns this section with National Standard 8, regarding sustained community participation in fisheries, and may provide real tools for protecting fisheries-dependent communities going forward.

“As a community that has invoked and benefited from MSA Section 312 when the snow crab fishery collapsed in 2000, Saint Paul supports several of the proposed revisions under Section 201 of the bill amending Section 312 regarding fishery resource disaster relief. We anticipate that as the impacts of climate change on our oceans, fisheries, and coastal communities grow exponentially, the need for more limber and expansive tools to respond to resource disasters will grow too. Enabling tribes to request fishery resource disaster determinations as well as to benefit from the disbursement of appropriated funds greatly enhances the usefulness of the 312 tool for underserved populations.”

Mike Williams Sr., Chair, Kuskokwim River Inter-tribal Fish Commission: “We need to have voices representing the many Indigenous Peoples in Alaska, especially on this important Council that makes policy decisions about our salmon. Our livelihoods depend on good management of our fisheries across the Alaskan coasts and in our rivers, and it is very important that two valuable Indigenous voices are included into the MSA. This will help share Traditional Knowledge to make management decisions that will be good for the health of our people and our fisheries in Alaska. KRITFC appreciates the work Rep. Huffman and Rep. Case have done. We hope that the MSA is reauthorized as introduced in, and we look forward to putting our knowledge into the important decisions made by the Council regarding the high seas fisheries where our salmon grow before returning to our rivers.

Bill Mott, Executive Director, The Ocean Project: “Ocean conservation is at an important moment, with the anticipated reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Advancing science-based fisheries and ensuring we have healthy, sustainable marine ecosystems in the United States is

critically important for many reasons, and for all Americans. The Ocean Project applauds the nationwide, bipartisan effort that Chairman Huffman has led to more fully involve the American public, including traditional and non-traditional stakeholders. We look forward to working closely with Chairman Huffman and other leaders on both sides of the aisle to ensure that our nation leads the world with strong, science-based fisheries conservation policies.”

Jessica Grannis, Interim Vice President of Coastal Conservation, National Audubon Society: “For 45 years, the MSA has successfully ended chronic overfishing and ensured a healthy, sustainable ocean economy. Now it’s time to plan for the ocean’s future in the face of climate change. This new bill will ensure we are maintaining healthy fish populations and protecting important habitats like marshes and seagrass beds, which fish, seabirds and coastal communities all rely on.”

Meredith Moore, Director of the Fish Conservation Program, Ocean Conservancy: “Climate change is reshaping our ocean and the fisheries it supports, putting marine fish populations, ecosystems, and coastal communities at risk. This ambitious and profoundly necessary legislation offered by Reps. Huffman and Case commits our nation to manage our fisheries sustainably amidst a rapidly changing climate and moves us toward a just and equitable system. It is the right bill at the right moment, and we hope to see it passed into law.”

Molly Masterton, U.S. Fisheries Director, Natural Resources Defense Council: “The Magnuson-Stevens Act has shown us that putting long-term fisheries sustainability first works. Representatives Huffman and Case’s Sustaining America’s Fisheries for the Future Act sets the bar for a reauthorization that would build on the MSA’s successes, plus recharge it to tackle challenges both old, like chronic overfishing, and new, like climate change and the havoc it is wreaking on marine ecosystems. This is a major step in securing a healthy and resilient future for our fisheries.”

