June 22, 2018

The Honorable Paul Ryan  The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515 Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan, and Leader Pelosi:

As recreational fishermen from the Gulf of Mexico – the ultimate angler’s paradise - we write to urge you to prevent bringing forward for a vote H.R. 200, the Strengthening Fishing Communities and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act, which would modify the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA). The MSA has been working to curb overfishing and to rebuild depleted fisheries through a combination of science-driven catch limits and required recovery plans. As a result, more than 40 fish populations have been rebuilt to healthy levels since 2000, and overfishing has been dramatically reduced. H.R. 200 would undermine these proven tools, which in turn threatens to undermine stable and abundant recreational fisheries.

Recreational anglers benefit from abundant populations that give us an opportunity to catch more fish, which are either harvested or released back into the water. When fish populations decline, the recreational experience is negatively affected, the economic impact of our activity wanes, and coastal economies suffer. The MSA’s conservation framework requires that overfished populations are rebuilt in as short a time as possible, thus minimizing the time we must endure poor fishing. H.R. 200 would eliminate this rebuilding timeline, allowing fisheries managers to relax rebuilding plans, which would keep fishery abundance at lower levels for a longer time. We oppose this short-sighted provision.

Furthermore, H.R. 200 would allow many different fisheries to be exempted from annual catch limits. We have seen annual catch limits work to end overfishing by holding everyone who fishes responsible to stay within their limits. Placing clear limits on catch and enforcing those limits is a common tenant of responsible fish and game management and should absolutely continue to apply to all ocean fisheries, as well.

As recreational anglers who have seen impressive progress toward sustainable saltwater fisheries management under the MSA, we urge you to oppose any effort that would undermine the conservation aspects of the MSA. We desire to pass along to our children even better fishing opportunities – and bigger fish – than we have now. Please work to keep the MSA strong by avoiding proposals like H.R. 200.

Sincerely,

**TEXAS**

Will Brown  Sean Polk  Greg Welander
Angler  Tailwaters Fly Fishing Co.  Sportsman’s Finest
Dallas, TX  Dallas, TX  Austin, TX

Gibson McGuire  Rick Pope  Steven Palmer
Fly Fish Rockport  Temple Rod Outfitters  Orvis Angler
Rockport, TX  Dallas, TX  Garland, TX
Jason Edgecombe
Eva's Bonefish Lodge
Houston, TX

Brett Delk
Angler
Fort Worth, TX

Gabe Langler
Angler
Granbury, TX

Rachel Terranova
Angler
Beford, TX

Keagan Walls
Angler
Plano, TX

Stephen Brady
Angler
Mansfield, TX

Zackary C. Neville
Outfitter
Austin, TX

Preston Baehr
Angler
Dallas, TX

Larry Sandell
Angler
Dallas, TX

Bruce Montoya
Angler
Roane, NY

Bill McNally
Angler
Plano, TX

Joseph Begue
Angler
Dallas, TX

Russell Davis
Angler Richardson, TX

Cheryl L. Ebbs
Angler
Tyler, TX

Homer Eubanks
Angler
Tyler, TX

Jesse Jasso
Angler
Arlington, TX

Nick Prescott
Angler
Rockwall, TX

Jack Miller
Angler
Plano, TX

Dan McCarthy
Angler
Dallas, TX

John G. Wood
Angler
Deuton, TX

Jim Collins
Angler
Prosper, TX

Scott Fletcher
Angler
Dallas, TX

Travis Todd
Angler
Dallas, TX

Robert McEwan
Angler
Waco, TX

Paul Nichols
Angler
Burleson, TX

Ed Linberg
Angler
Frisco, TX

Jake Walker
Angler
Addison, TX

Jared Walker
Angler
Addison, TX

Casy Kennedy
Angler
Austin, TX

Suzanne & David Koellner
Rockwall, TX

Arturo Gonzalez
Dallas, TX

Ryan Pens
Angler
Dallas, TX

Bruce Shuler
Angler
Salado, TX

Shirley Shuler
Angler
Salado, TX

Jesse Allen
Angler
Boerne, TX

Stephanie Ricks
Angler
Austin, TX

Steve Davis
Angler
New Braunfels, TX

Dennis McKay
Angler
Dallas, TX

John Royal
Angler
Seabrook, TX

Paige Adell
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Mitch Richmond
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Port Mansfield, TX

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McAllen, TX

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James Derryberry
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John Tindall
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Bart Haddad
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Glen Davis
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Jessica Lefere
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Jessica Rady
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Elaina Stanford
Angler
Jackson, MS

FLORIDA
Tan Ree
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Leonard Delia
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Heather Rouse
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Big Pine Key, FL

Ben Bulis
Angler
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Joel Dickey
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Lynn Bell
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Big Pine Key, FL

Steven M Hancock
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Belinda Hancock
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Big Pine Key, FL

Caitlin Lustic
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Edie Kehoe
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Sarah Maschal
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Sara Chard
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Thomas D Ryan
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Jon E Baird
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Mehgan E Heaps
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Lenore Baker
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Stacy McKie
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Chris Rose
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Andy Mill
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Nicky Mill
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Michael Haas
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Jim Hancock
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Sam Sutton
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Roy Torres
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Sue Hewlings
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Bruce Chard
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Bj Chard
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Rob Kramarz
Angler
Big Pine Key, FL

Caroline Smith
Angler
St Petersburg, FL

Terry Gibson
Angler
Stuart, FL

Jerry McBride
Angler
Panama City Beach, FL

Tim Hunter
Angler
Miami, FL

Kiara Barbiara
Angler
Dunedin, FL

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Sarasota, FL

Shirley Noto
Angler
Tampa, FL

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Angler
Naples, FL

Van Hubbard
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Evan Smith
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Luke Cross
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Melissa Isaacs
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Guiselle Cruz
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Brandon Shuler
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Justine Ortiz
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Ryan Ortiz
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Fazela Mahoud
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Crosswoods, FL

Chris McHan
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Ashley Reed
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Ridley Reynolds
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Henry Buck
Bonefish & Tarpon Trust
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Amanda Matthews
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Sky Johnston
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Mike Shepard
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Fort Walton Beach, FL

James Taylor
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Nicole Hansen
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Jeni Burns
Angler
Santa Rosa Beach, FL

John Lawler
Angler
Miramar Beach, FL

Billy Deames
Angler
Destin, FL

Rocky Thickstun
Angler
Mereaux, LA

Darren Fournerat
Angler
Zachary, LA

Jamie Bissett
Angler
Slidell, LA

Dave Best
Angler
New Orleans, LA

Bailey Short
Angler
Baton Rouge, LA

Austin Langley
Angler
Thibidoux, LA
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