



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 26, 2017

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Network Applauds New Direction for Renewing Magnuson-Stevens

Arlington, VA – The Marine Fish Conservation Network today praised Representative Jared Huffman’s (D-CA) discussion draft to reauthorize the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act as a positive step toward responsible, science-based fisheries management.

The Network believes that the comprehensive legislative language put forward for discussion at the House Natural Resources’ Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans’ hearing today is the first practical attempt to renew the law this Congress. In 2017, House members have introduced several bills that would only serve to weaken measures for conserving the long-term health of our nation’s fisheries.

“Representative Huffman’s discussion draft incorporates many of the Network’s values for healthy oceans, productive fisheries and vibrant coastal communities,” said Robert C. Vandermark, executive director of the Marine Fish Conservation Network. “Mr. Huffman’s bill represents a refreshing step in the right direction for our nation’s sustainable fisheries.”

“While not perfect, the Mr. Huffman’s draft bill is a considerable improvement over other short-sighted fisheries-related legislation introduced this year,” said Vandermark. “By working closely with members of Congress on both sides of the aisle, as in years past, Congress can develop a bill that truly protects the fisheries resources upon which coastal communities and working waterfronts depend.”

Other fisheries bills to be discussed at the Subcommittee’s hearing – [H.R. 200, “Strengthening Fishing Communities and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act,”](#) [H.R. 2023, “The Modern Fish Act,”](#) and [H.R. 3588, “The Red SNAPPER Act”](#) – would undermine conservation measures, such as science-based catch limits and accountability measures, which have successfully improved the health of U.S. fish stocks over the past decade. These bills also seek greater flexibility and alternative management for recreational fishing sectors that prioritize short-term economic gain at the expense of long-term conservation of fisheries resources.

“Fish stocks are healthier than they were a decade ago due in large part to the science-based conservation measures passed in the last reauthorization of the

Magnuson-Stevens Act," said Dave Monti, a charter captain and a vice president of Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association. "I support the concept of tailored management for different sectors as long as any proposed alternatives stay within the annual catch limits determined by best available science."

"The Magnuson-Stevens Act promotes healthy, robust fisheries, which are the cornerstones of working waterfronts and coastal communities around the country," said Noah Oppenheim, executive director of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations. "Magnuson-Stevens reauthorization is a golden opportunity for Congress to reinforce the core tenets of fisheries sustainability and community access to fish stocks. Using a do-no-harm approach, we hope to see Mr. Huffman's bill do precisely that."

The [House Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans](#)' hearing takes place today at 10:00 AM in the Longworth House Office Building.

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*The **Marine Fish Conservation Network** is a coalition of commercial and recreational fishing associations, regional and national conservation groups, aquaria, and marine science organizations committed to sustaining fish populations, healthy marine ecosystems, and robust fishing communities. For more information, visit us at www.conservefish.org or follow us on Facebook or Twitter (@marinefishcons).*