

## **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO MEMORIALIZE THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES TO ENACT WITHOUT DELAY S. 632, THE "FLEXIBILITY IN REBUILDING AMERICAN FISHERIES ACT" WHICH, AMONG OTHER PROVISIONS, EXTENDS THE TIME PERIOD FOR REBUILDING CERTAIN OVERFISHED FISHERIES, AND TO REQUEST THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE TO SET AS A PRIORITY FUNDING FOR FISHERIES DATA NEEDS AND FISHERY STOCK ASSESSMENTS.

Whereas, in 2006, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act was amended by Congress to include tough, inflexible mandates that require regional fishery management councils and the United States Secretary of Commerce to end overfishing immediately and rebuild fisheries in ten years or less; and

Whereas, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended, has resulted in fishery management measures adopted by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) and the United States Secretary of Commerce, such as fishery closures and drastic catch reductions, that are having unacceptable and unnecessary socioeconomic impacts on fishermen and coastal businesses in South Carolina; and

Whereas, S. 632, the "Flexibility in Rebuilding American Fisheries Act", has been recently introduced in the United States Senate to amend the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to allow regional fishery councils and the United States Secretary of Commerce the needed flexibility to implement fishery rebuilding plans that may exceed ten years in length under certain circumstances; and

Whereas, current fisheries data used to manage federal fisheries within the mandates of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, impacting fisherman and coastal communities and businesses, are incomplete and highly inaccurate; and

Whereas, fishery stock assessments used to determine the status of fisheries under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act are conducted infrequently and many important South Atlantic fisheries have never been assessed as a result of funding priorities within the United States Department of Commerce; and

Whereas, recreational and commercial saltwater fishing is vital to the coastal economy of South Carolina and employs thousands of state residents directly and indirectly; and

Whereas, according to a 2008 University of South Carolina study, coastal tourism in South Carolina had a total annual economic impact of over seven billion dollars, employed nearly eighty-one thousand South Carolinians, and generated over two billion dollars in salary and wages; and

Whereas, according to a 2006 American Sportfishing Association study, South Carolina was ranked fifth among all states for nonresident expenditures on recreational fishing with over three hundred fifty million dollars spent annually; and

Whereas, according to a 2006 American Sportfishing Association study, saltwater recreational fishing in South Carolina had a total annual economic impact of over one and a half billion dollars, employed nearly twelve thousand South Carolinians, generated over three hundred thirty-three million dollars in salary and wages, and generated over three hundred million dollars in tax revenues; and

Whereas, according to a 2008 University of South Carolina study, commercial fishing in South Carolina had a total annual economic impact of nearly thirty-four million dollars, employed nearly seven hundred South Carolinians, and generated nearly thirteen million dollars in salary and wages; and

Whereas, for the above reasons, the South Carolina General Assembly supports passage of S. 632, the "Flexibility in Rebuilding American Fisheries Act" and a prioritization of funding for fisheries data collection and fishery stock assessments by the United States Department of Commerce through its Secretary. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly memorialize the Congress of the United States to enact without delay S. 632, the "Flexibility in Rebuilding American Fisheries Act", which, among other provisions, extends the time period for rebuilding certain overfished fisheries.

Be it further resolved that the South Carolina General Assembly further requests the United States Department of Commerce to set as a priority funding to improve the accuracy of fisheries data and to increase the frequency and scope of fishery stock assessments within the South Atlantic region.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the South Carolina Congressional Delegation, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and South Carolina representatives to SAFMC National Marine Fisheries Service.

[http://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess119\\_2011-2012/bills/4206.htm](http://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess119_2011-2012/bills/4206.htm)