

By Senator Baker

20-01056-10

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Senate Memorial

A memorial to the Congress of the United States,  
urging Congress to consider all available mechanisms  
to lessen the sudden impact of the changes made to the  
Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management  
Act of 2007 and seek to balance resource protection  
and economic prosperity in Florida.

WHEREAS, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and  
Management Act of 2007 emphasized preventing overfishing and  
rebuilding overfished stocks, and

WHEREAS, recent revisions to the act were prompted in part  
by criticism of progress toward ending overfishing and  
rebuilding fish stocks, and

WHEREAS, such revisions impose significant restrictions on  
commercial and recreational fishing in federal waters and  
prohibitively short deadlines to end overfishing, and

WHEREAS, every federally managed fishery is required to  
implement annual catch limits and accountability measures by  
2011, except with respect to Florida, and

WHEREAS, Florida is required to implement annual catch  
limits by 2010 which are low enough to end, and then prevent,  
overfishing for federally managed species that are subject to  
overfishing, as determined by the United States Secretary of  
Commerce, and

WHEREAS, such requirements include accountability measures  
which stipulate that if catch limits are exceeded for such  
federally managed species, federal actions must be stipulated to  
compensate for the harvest overage, and

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30 WHEREAS, the consequence of such accountability measures is  
31 that certain types of fishing activity, such as recreational  
32 fishing, could be faced with ever-increasing limits imposed over  
33 a minimal timeframe, and

34 WHEREAS, in the federal waters of the South Atlantic, there  
35 are 10 species of economically important reef fish that are  
36 subject to the new deadline, and

37 WHEREAS, a number of similar actions to restrict harvest of  
38 reef fish in the Gulf of Mexico have been instituted, and

39 WHEREAS, federal managers are considering a complete  
40 closure of all fishing for the Atlantic red snapper fishery, and

41 WHEREAS, severely restricting or eliminating harvest for 10  
42 of the state's most valuable reef fish species simultaneously  
43 will have the unfortunate impact of putting people out of  
44 business, and

45 WHEREAS, the act requires federal managers to use the best  
46 scientific information available to end overfishing and provide  
47 future sustainable harvest, and

48 WHEREAS, even though fishery scientists are using the best  
49 scientific information available, there continues to be  
50 inadequate funding to conduct the level of fisheries monitoring  
51 and research work necessary to meet the standards of the act,  
52 and

53 WHEREAS, to meet such standards, it is imperative to  
54 provide federal fishery managers with the financial means  
55 necessary to gather and analyze more complete and continuous  
56 information on the status of fish stocks, and

57 WHEREAS, consistent with these conservation requirements,  
58 recent changes to the act direct that economic impacts to

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59 fishing communities be minimized and that mechanisms be provided  
60 to support the economic health of fishing communities, and

61 WHEREAS, every effort should be made to provide economic  
62 assistance to key fishing industries and businesses that cannot  
63 survive the restrictions being implemented by recent changes to  
64 the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of  
65 2007, NOW, THEREFORE,

66

67 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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69 That the Congress of the United States is requested to  
70 consider all available mechanisms to lessen the sudden impact of  
71 the changes made to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation  
72 and Management Act of 2007 and seek to balance resource  
73 protection and economic prosperity in Florida.

74 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
75 dispatched to the President of the United States, to the  
76 President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the  
77 United States House of Representatives, and to each member of  
78 the Florida delegation to the United States Congress.