



PRESS RELEASE

Recreational Fishing Alliance

5724 N. Route 9, New Gretna, NJ 08224

P: 888-564-6732 F: 609-294-3812

For Immediate Release
Contact: Jim Hutchinson, Jr.

April 14, 2011
888 564-6732

JONES AMENDMENT BLOCKING CATCH SHARES MAY PASS SENATE RFA Says Bill Could Be Signed By President Obama By Friday Night

According to Congressman Walter B. Jones (R-NC), Congress is set to approve legislation (H.R. 1473) to fund the government for the rest of Fiscal Year 2011 which includes a version of an amendment which would block funding for approval of new controversial fisheries catch shares programs.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) had proposed to spend \$36 million to institute new catch share programs, which would destroy coastal fishing jobs across the country. The Jones amendment to block this funding was originally approved by the House on February 19, 2011 with an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 259 to 159. The language will prohibit the federal government from using any FY2011 funds to approve new catch shares programs for fisheries along the Eastern Seaboard and the Gulf of Mexico.

The House of Representatives passed H.R. 1473 this afternoon, and the bill is expected to be approved by the Senate and signed into law by the President by Friday night.

“This is a shot in the arm for fishermen and a shot across the bow of the National Marine Fisheries Service,” Rep. Jones said in a release issued on Thursday. “The last thing our government should be doing in these economic times is spending millions of taxpayer dollars to expand programs that will put even more Americans out of work. NMFS would be wise to take heed of the opposition of fishermen, the public and the Congress to their catch shares agenda; we’re not going away.”

The Recreational Fishing Alliance had lobbied extensively in the hours leading up to the House debate on H.R. 1, the Continuing Resolution to fund the federal government through the remainder of FY2011, issuing a [blast to members and constituents on February 16th](#) asking for support in opposition to the ‘cap and trade’ fisheries policy of catch shares. Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) activists had spent the week visiting the offices of federal legislators claiming erroneously to represent the interests of U.S. fishing communities while promoting their ‘Catch Share’ manifesto with Members of Congress in an effort to limit overall public access to coastal fisheries. .

"Fishing industry representatives who support Rep. Jones' amendment need to contact their Members of Congress in the House of Representatives and urge them to support the Jones Amendment #548 to block funding for catch shares," Donofrio said in an appeal to coastal advocates in February. Donofrio said he was thankful to the bipartisan block of coastal legislators who weighed in against what he called a “sharecropping scheme being perpetrated by EDF."

In the hours since the federal budget passed last week, ending threats of a government shutdown, RFA has been pressing to learn whether or not the aptly called Jones Amendment was included in the final fiscal plan. The information released today by Rep. Jones, praising many members of Congress in addition to Senators from both parties for joining the North Carolina Congressman and his co-sponsors including Congressmen Barney Frank (MA) and Frank Pallone (NJ), as well as Senators Scott Brown (MA), Charles Schumer (NY) and others for getting his legislation.

“RFA is grateful to Rep. Jones for spearheading this effort, and we also would like to praise Senator Kay R. Hagan (D-NC) as well for leading a bipartisan group of lawmakers in urging the Department of Commerce to consider alternatives to the national catch share program.” Donofrio pointed to a letter written by Sen. Kagan to Commerce Secretary Gary Locke, co-signed by Sens. Schumer (D-NY), Richard

Burr (R-NC), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), and Brown (R-MA), as well as Reps. Jones, Frank (D-MA), Peter DeFazio (D-OR), Frank Pallone (D-NJ), and Mike McIntyre (D-NC) as helping galvanize legislative efforts to help stop the catch shares momentum from steamrolling across our coastal communities.

“I’ve seen the names of several new advocates joining our ‘just say no to catch shares’ coastal chorus, and that’s a very good sign,” Donofrio said. “Now that we’re seeing some bipartisan unity in DC and stronger grassroots efforts to protect our American fishing interests, perhaps now we can build a broad-based coalition to support these same coastal legislators in getting our federal fisheries law reformed to the benefit of our coastal fishermen,” he added.

#####

The Recreational Fishing Alliance is a national, grassroots political action organization representing recreational fishermen and the recreational fishing industry on marine fisheries issues. RFA's Mission is to safeguard the rights of saltwater anglers, protect marine, boat and tackle industry jobs, and ensure the long-term sustainability of our Nation's saltwater fisheries. For more information, call 888-JOIN-RFA or visit www.joinrfa.org.