

By: Bonnen of Brazoria, Phelan

H.C.R. No. 105

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, In recent years, the Gulf of Mexico has contained
2 the highest total allowable catch of red snapper in decades, but in
3 2016, anglers experienced the shortest recreational fishing season
4 to date, lasting less than two weeks; and

5 WHEREAS, The U.S. government has overseen the Gulf
6 recreational red snapper fishery for nearly four decades; today,
7 federal management systems attempt to regulate red snapper fishing
8 by the pound with tools specifically designed to manage the
9 commercial sector, despite the fact that federal data collection
10 systems are incapable of accounting to such a level of specificity
11 for recreational harvests; and

12 WHEREAS, The U.S. government has, moreover, neglected to use
13 recent data to provide meaningful guidelines and requirements for a
14 systematic reallocation of federal fisheries; except for minor
15 adjustments to account for errors in its own data collection
16 system, the Gulf red snapper fishery allocation is based on highly
17 suspect data from 1979-1986 and has remained unchanged since 1991;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, The federal government is currently promoting a
20 management strategy to privatize the Gulf red snapper fishery;
21 approximately 50 percent of the fishery is already held by private
22 businesses, while another 20 percent has been designated to be
23 sold; shares of this public resource have also been given away for
24 free, based on a commercial operator's past catch history; and

1 WHEREAS, Because of extraordinarily remiss requirements in
2 its conflict of interest guidelines, the federal fisheries
3 management system allows commercial operators who already own red
4 snapper shares or who may be gifted shares to serve on the Gulf of
5 Mexico Fishery Management Council and to cast votes on issues that
6 will result in direct financial benefit for them; and

7 WHEREAS, By creating a prohibitive environment for anglers
8 and ethical issues among user groups and stakeholders, the U.S.
9 government has proved itself incapable of properly managing red
10 snapper fishing in the Gulf of Mexico, and all five states along the
11 Gulf Coast have increasingly needed to implement regulations and
12 seasons that are not consistent with the federal management plan;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Numerous studies, including some funded by NOAA
15 Fisheries, indicate that the greatest economic engine in the Gulf
16 reef fishery is the recreational angling sector, and federal
17 control should be relinquished to the Gulf states, which depend
18 most on this vital public resource; now, therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas
20 hereby encourage Congress to pass legislation or adopt policies
21 allowing Texas to manage the Gulf of Mexico red snapper fishery out
22 to 200 nautical miles; and, be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
24 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to
25 the president of the Senate and to the speaker of the House of
26 Representatives of the United States Congress, and to all the
27 members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that

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1 this resolution be entered in the Congressional Record as a
2 memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.