

Regular Session, 2013

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 25

BY SENATORS ALLAIN, ADLEY, ALARIO, AMEDEE, APPEL, BROWN,
BUFFINGTON, CHABERT, CLAITOR, CORTEZ, CROWE, ERDEY,
GUILLORY, HEITMEIER, JOHNS, KOSTELKA, MARTINY, MILLS,
MORRELL, MORRISH, MURRAY, NEVERS, PEACOCK, PERRY,
RISER, GARY SMITH, THOMPSON, WALSWORTH, WARD,
WHITE AND LONG

CONGRESS. Memorializes Congress and requests the secretary of the U.S. Dept. of Commerce to take such action as necessary to require the regional administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service's Southeast Regional Office and his scientists to attend a meeting of the Louisiana Senate Committee on Natural Resources and provide information on the red snapper season.

A RESOLUTION

To memorialize the Congress of the United States and request the secretary of the United States Department of Commerce to take such action as necessary to require the regional administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service's Southeast Regional Office and his scientists to attend a meeting of the Louisiana Senate Committee on Natural Resources, on a date that is convenient for the parties during the month of April or the first week of May, to provide information on the red snapper season.

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the National Marine Fisheries Service, an agency in the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, through the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council, to manage and regulate marine species located in the Gulf of Mexico; and

WHEREAS, such management and regulation includes a determination of the sustainability of each species and preservation of the sustainability through the setting of take limits, individual fishing quotas, and opening and closing seasons; and

WHEREAS, on March 25, 2013, a temporary emergency rule was published in the Federal Register that gives the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Services the authority to set separate closure dates for the recreational red snapper

1 season in federal waters off the individual Gulf of Mexico states; and

2 WHEREAS, the closure dates will depend on whether state regulations are consistent
3 with federal regulations for the recreational red snapper season length or bag limit; and

4 WHEREAS, the federal recreational season for Gulf of Mexico red snapper begins
5 June 1 each year with a two-fish bag limit and the length of the season is determined by the
6 amount of the quota, the average weight of fish landed, and the estimated catch rates over
7 time; and

8 WHEREAS, since NOAA Fisheries is responsible for ensuring that the entire
9 recreational harvest, including harvest in state waters, does not exceed the recreational quota,
10 then if states establish a longer season or a larger bag limit for state waters than the federal
11 regulations allow in federal waters, the federal season must be adjusted to account for the
12 additional harvest expected in state waters; and

13 WHEREAS, if all states were to implement consistent regulations, the 2013
14 recreational season would be twenty-eight days, assuming the recreational quota is increased
15 to 4.145 million pounds through separate rule-making; and

16 WHEREAS, in addition to Louisiana, the states of Texas and Florida have indicated
17 to NOAA Fisheries that they will implement inconsistent red snapper regulations for their
18 state waters; and

19 WHEREAS, without this emergency rule, the 2013 federal season would be reduced
20 to twenty-two days to compensate for that additional expected harvest; and

21 WHEREAS, this emergency rule allows NOAA Fisheries to calculate the recreational
22 red snapper fishing season separately in the exclusive economic zone off each state to
23 account for any inconsistency of regulations in state waters; and

24 WHEREAS, based on the expected regulations for Texas, Louisiana, and Florida, the
25 preliminary season lengths would be as follows: Texas, twelve days; Louisiana, nine days;
26 Mississippi and Alabama, twenty-eight days; and Florida, twenty-one days; and

27 WHEREAS, on March 23, 2013, Louisiana implemented a weekend-only
28 recreational red snapper season that will end on September 30, with a recreational bag limit
29 of three fish per day at a sixteen-inch minimum; and

30 WHEREAS, the regional administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric

1 Administration Fisheries Service's Southeast Regional Office and his scientists can provide
2 information on the following issues: (1) emergency rule on the recreational closure authority
3 specific to federal waters off individual states for the recreational red snapper component of
4 the Gulf of Mexico reef fish fishery; (2) methodology for determination of the length,
5 allocations, and quotas for the red snapper season; (3) plans for the future allocations and
6 quotas of red snapper; (4) update on the regional and Gulf of Mexico red snapper stock
7 assessments on natural and artificial habitats; (5) relationship of size of quota to recovery
8 of red snapper fisheries; (6) general conditions and health of red snapper fisheries and
9 projections for future; and (7) requirements in order for Louisiana to get additional
10 allocations or quotas based on Louisiana's management and growth of the red snapper
11 fisheries.

12 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana memorializes
13 the Congress of the United States and requests the secretary of the United States Department
14 of Commerce to take such action as necessary to require the regional administrator of the
15 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service's Southeast Regional
16 Office and his scientists to attend a meeting of the Louisiana Senate Committee on Natural
17 Resources, on a date that is convenient for the parties during the month of April or the first
18 week of May, to provide information on the red snapper season.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted
20 to the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the United States House of
21 Representatives, to each member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress,
22 to the secretary of the United States Department of Commerce, and the regional
23 administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service's
24 Southeast Regional Office.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by J. W. Wiley.

DIGEST

Allain

SR No. 25

Memorializes Congress and requests the secretary of the U.S. Dept. of Commerce to take such action as necessary to require the regional administrator of the NOAA Fisheries Service's Southeast Regional Office and his scientists to attend a meeting of the Louisiana Senate Committee on Natural Resources and provide information on the red snapper season.