

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 111

To provide that the Secretary of Commerce shall not issue an interim or final rule or Secretarial Amendment that includes an area or bottom closure in the South Atlantic for species managed under the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region until the South Atlantic Great Red Snapper Count study is complete and the data related to that study is integrated into the stock assessment.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 16, 2025

Mr. SCOTT of Florida introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

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1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Red Snapper Act of
3 2025”.

4 **SEC. 2. CONDITIONS FOR RULES AND SECRETARIAL**
5 **AMENDMENTS RELATED TO CERTAIN AREA**
6 **CLOSURES.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Fishing is a major economic driver in the
9 South Atlantic. In Florida alone, recreational an-
10 glers provide \$14,000,000,000 in economic output
11 and support 119,000 jobs.

12 (2) Red snapper is a highly prized and sought
13 after reef fish by both recreational and commercial
14 fishermen.

15 (3) The 6-day recreational red snapper season
16 in 2018 added \$13,000,000 to the gross domestic
17 product of the South Atlantic region.

18 (4) Since 2010, fishery managers have success-
19 fully been working to rebuild the red snapper stock
20 in the South Atlantic. There is currently record high
21 abundance and strong recruitment within the stock.

22 (5) This record abundance has led to increased
23 out-of-season encounters and discards which is driv-
24 ing red snapper mortality.

25 (6) Despite these increased discards, it is the
26 overriding opinion of the South Atlantic Fishery

1 Management Council's Snapper Grouper Advisory
2 Panel that based on members' collective on-the-water
3 experience, the red snapper fishery is recovered.

4 (7) However, options for future consideration to
5 reduce out-of-season encounters and red snapper
6 mortalities include shorter seasons and broad area
7 closures for the snapper-grouper fishery in the South
8 Atlantic.

9 (8) The State of Florida is concerned with the
10 economic implications of area closures for the South
11 Atlantic snapper-grouper recreational fishery.

12 (9) \$8,700,000 has been invested in inde-
13 pendent survey data over the last 3 fiscal years, in-
14 cluding \$3,300,000 for the South Atlantic Great
15 Red Snapper Count to estimate the number of red
16 snapper (*Lutjanus campechanus*) in the South At-
17 lantic waters from North Carolina to Florida.

18 (10) The National Marine Fisheries Service
19 should incorporate data from this survey into the
20 National Marine Fisheries Service stock assessments
21 as expeditiously as possible to better inform fishery
22 management decisions.

23 (b) CONDITION ON ISSUANCE OF CERTAIN RULE OR
24 SECRETARIAL AMENDMENT.—The Secretary of Com-
25 merce shall not issue an interim or final rule or a Secre-

1 tarial Amendment that includes an area or bottom closure
2 in the South Atlantic for species managed under the Fish-
3 ery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery
4 of the South Atlantic Region until—

5 (1) the South Atlantic Great Red Snapper
6 Count study is complete; and

7 (2) the data related to that study is integrated
8 into the first South Atlantic red snapper Southeast
9 Data, Assessment and Review stock assessment that
10 is carried out after the date of the enactment of this
11 section.

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