

Commercial and recreational fishermen and the seafood industry that manages how the fish get from the boat to our table, they support this legislation. I want to reemphasize that that is perhaps unique. For the first time, all three elements—commercial, seafood industry, recreational fishermen—are all in support of updating this law in this particular fashion.

This bill provides flexibility, and it is a bill for the entire Nation. So it provides the flexibility that is essential for the fishing community in New England. It provides and incorporates State and local data on making fish population assessments, which is significant for the fish community in the Gulf of Mexico. It provides greater transparency as to how management decisions are made in a very open way, which is what it is supposed to be doing in the first place.

The proposed changes were not developed overnight. The Natural Resources Committee held 10 hearings, heard more than 80 witnesses over the last 4 years in deliberating over the changes that are needed to this particular law. That is why I am very pleased with the positive statements that have been made by both sides of the aisle on this legislation.

During the last Congress, the ranking member at that time said “the changes that were negotiated on a number of provisions of the bill” were something for which he thanked the majority.

Another one of the minority members was quoted also as saying: “I do appreciate the fact that you reached out to us on the Democratic side of the aisle and many of the provisions, as you mentioned, that are in the bill did come from input from the Democratic side.”

Those words speak for themselves. This bill is the product of years of work, having reached out to Members on both sides of the aisle, having reached out to Members in different regions of our country, reached out to stakeholders of varying perspectives, and we reached out to the agency to craft a reauthorization that improves the process. We have done that.

It is unfortunate in my mind the administration recently announced opposition to this bill. Rather than giving you my thoughts on that—or maybe that is a reason why you would support it in the first place—let me simply quote the New Bedford Standard-Times. They did an editorial in their paper in that bastion of conservatism, Massachusetts. They disagreed with the White House’s opposition to the bill, and they ended by saying: “Looking at the bill and its accomplishment of making management more responsive to science, and contrasting it with the empty arguments of the White House policy statement, it seems very clear where politics fits into this.”

Mr. Chairman, this bill is a win for consumers. It is a win for the industry that puts food on our tables. It is a win

for the restaurants. It is a win for the recreational fishermen. It is a win for better and more transparent science. It is a win for our environment. It is a win for the American taxpayers. There is no significant increase in the cost, but there is a significant increase in the solutions in this area, which is, once again, why all the major players who were involved in this—both the commercial side, recreational side—are in common agreement that this is the way we need to go forward.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Last year, the Natural Resources Committee reported a bill almost identical to this one with only one Democratic Member voting in favor. Dubbed the “Empty Oceans Act” by fishermen and conservationists across the country, the bill met stiff opposition both on and off Capitol Hill, and the Republican leadership did not bring it up for consideration by the full House. That showed remarkable restraint and good judgment.

Fast forward 1 year to today’s debate and the vote on legislation that has the same flaws and has drawn the same opposition. The only real difference is this time around, not a single committee Democrat voted to report the bill. Committee Republicans did not reach out to us to discuss changes that might have made this a bipartisan effort, even though the original Magnuson-Stevens Act and the 1996 and 2006 reauthorizations were bipartisan and passed both Houses of Congress with virtually no opposition.

Those efforts made necessary, legitimate, and incremental changes to U.S. fisheries law that have moved us closer and closer to achieving the goal of sustainable, profitable fisheries. We had an opportunity to reauthorize Magnuson and continue moving in the right direction, but once again, House Republicans have let partisanship get in the way of progress.

Instead of working with us to craft thoughtful, targeted legislation to update Magnuson, Republicans have taken this as an opportunity to assault bedrock conservation laws while at the same time taking us back to fisheries management policies that we know have failed fishing communities in the past.

As Chairman BISHOP said himself, when testifying before the Rules Committee last month, these are “not just modest amendments, these are major amendments.” I could not agree more.

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Provisions in the bill which will end successful efforts to rebuild overfished stocks and coastal economy are major amendments. Short-circuiting public review under NEPA is a major amendment. Overriding the Endangered Species Act, the Antiquities Act, and the National Marine Sanctuaries Act laws

that have made fisheries more sustainable and productive by protecting vulnerable sea life and valuable ocean habitat are major, major amendments.

These amendments are also unnecessary. NOAA recently announced that the value of U.S. fisheries has reached an all-time high, while the number of overfished stock has reached an all-time low. We should celebrate these gains, but also recognize we have room for improvement.

Not all fisheries have received the benefit of the transition to the sustainable harvest levels because transition is still underway. For example, overfishing of Atlantic cod in New England waters occurred in 2013 and 2014, despite the Magnuson mandate to end overfishing. The science-based conservation measures in the law will end this overfishing, rebuild the stocks, but not if the bill before us were to become law.

We must stay the course: fully rebuild fisheries that can contribute and will contribute \$31 billion to the economy and support half a million new jobs. We cannot afford to go back to the bad old days where politics trumped science in fishery management. Instead, let’s go back to the drawing board and work together on a bill to reauthorize Magnuson-Stevens and keep improving on our fisheries.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 184. An act to amend the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act to require background checks before foster care placements are ordered in tribal court proceedings, and for other purposes.

S. 246. An act to establish the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children, and for other purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

STRENGTHENING FISHING COMMUNITIES AND INCREASING FLEXIBILITY IN FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ACT

The Committee resumed its sitting.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), the sponsor of this piece of legislation. He is the senior member of our committee, as well as someone who knows more about this issue than probably anyone else on the floor.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Thank you to the chairman of the full committee.

Mr. Chairman, history is a wonderful thing. People who went through the