



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

March 2, 2010

Dr. Roy Crabtree
Southeast Regional Administrator
NOAA Fisheries Service
Southeast Regional Office
263 13th Avenue South
Saint Petersburg, Florida 33701

Dear Dr. Crabtree,

As a member of the Florida Congressional delegation and an avid angler, I am concerned with the inadequate representation of the state of Florida within the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (SAFMC) Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). Addressing this under-representation is especially critical since the announcement of the recent red-snapper closure and the contemplation of additional closures for the snapper-grouper complex. As you are aware, the SSC provides critical recommendations to SAFMC including analysis of social and economic impacts of council policies.

The devastating impacts of these closures on the economy and the unemployment level in Florida must be carefully weighed. According to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), Florida averages 35 million fishing trips each year with an economic impact of over \$5 billion and 50,000 jobs. Florida is the "fishing capital of the world" and yet it is represented by only three people on the sixteen-member SSC. In fact, the number of Florida representatives is equal to the collective number of representatives from Maine, Virginia, and Canada – which are not impacted by SAFMC regulations.

Florida's reputation as a leader in fisheries science and management demands that it have strong representation on the SSC; representation that is in concert with the state's biological and economic contributions from fishing within the region. Because of the state's management competence and the economic importance of the Florida fisheries, it is important that the SSC have the right technical balance. Therefore, I request within all appropriate rules and regulations that Florida be appropriately represented.

I trust that you will carefully consider my concern and suggestions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Adam H. Putnam".

Adam H. Putnam
Member of Congress

CC: Mr. Duane Harris, Chairman, South Atlantic Regional Fisheries Council