

STEPHEN L. GOLDFINCH  
SENATOR, GEORGETOWN, CHARLESTON,  
AND HORRY COUNTIES  
SENATORIAL DISTRICT NO. 34

COLUMBIA ADDRESS:  
P.O. BOX 142  
601 GRESSETTE SENATE OFFICE BUILDING  
COLUMBIA, SC 29202  
PHONE: (803)-212-6116  
FAX: (803)-212-6299



COMMITTEES:  
AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES  
FISH, GAME, & FORESTRY  
GENERAL  
INVITATIONS  
JUDICIARY  
LABOR, COMMERCE, & INDUSTRY

HOME ADDRESS:  
P. O. BOX 823  
MURRELLS INLET, SC 29576

Dr. Michelle Duval, Chair  
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council  
4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201  
North Charleston, SC 29405

March 6, 2017

Dear Dr. Duval and Council Members,

I write to express my strong opposition to the commercial snapper-grouper pilot catch share Exempted Fishing Permit under consideration by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries.

Repeatedly, fishery stakeholders have overwhelmingly told the SAFMC and NOAA they do not support catch share fishery management. Input on the SAFMC's long-range snapper-grouper Vision management plan was 97 percent against any form of catch shares – a plan the SAFMC promised would be driven by stakeholders.

Online stakeholder comments on the proposed EFP have flooded in, with almost 99 percent against to date, which should be no surprise.

I have heard strong opposition to the EFP from commercial and recreational fishermen and fishing dependent business in the coastal senate district I represent. They are concerned about the privatization of our fishery resources and the loss of fishing jobs that catch shares represent.

Catch share programs around the nation have consolidated fishing fleets, reduced access to the resource and caused the loss of tens of thousands of fishing jobs, hurting fishing communities like the ones I represent.

Fishery stakeholders are also concerned about the potential conflicts of interests of having sitting and former SAFMC members, all commercial snapper-grouper fleet owners and dealers, as applicants for this EFP. This erodes confidence in the integrity of the federal fishery management process, something that should be avoided.

I ask the SAFMC and NOAA Fisheries to listen to the overwhelming opposition of fishery stakeholders as promised and disapprove this pilot catch share EFP.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephen L. Goldfinch".

Senator Stephen L. Goldfinch

Cc: SCDNR