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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3303

March 8, 2017

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

Dear Council Members:

On behalf of the vast majority of North Carolina commercial snapper-grouper fishermen that I am privileged to represent, I respectfully urge you to consider recommending disapproval of the pending Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) application from the South Atlantic Commercial Fishing Collaborative.

It is my understanding that 97 percent of commenters on the council's draft vision blueprint expressed opposition to including a voluntary catch share program as an element of future management of the South Atlantic snapper-grouper fishery. As a result, the council chose to remove that option from consideration. It is also my understanding that a similar EFP proposal was put forward in 2013, and rejected. Clearly, the overwhelming sentiment of permit holders, and the precedent of prior council actions, argue for opposition to this application.

As our Declaration of Independence so eloquently states, "Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed." In this case, the snapper-grouper permit holders of the South Atlantic have not only not given their consent to this proposal, they appear to be nearly unanimous in their opposition. As you deliberate on this matter, I urge you to keep these thoughts in mind.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress