



July 18, 2025

Georgetown County Council  
129 Screven Street  
Georgetown, SC 29440

**Re: Ordinance Number 25-22 – Beach Regulations; to Regulate Fishing on Public Beaches; and to Provide for Public Safety on Beaches**

**Position: Oppose**

Dear Honorable Members of the Georgetown County Council,

As leaders of the South Carolina Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus, we write to express our strong opposition to Ordinance Number 25-22. This proposal, as currently written, would ban surf fishing from public beaches in Georgetown County from 7:30 am to 7:00 pm May 1 through September 30 annually.

Whether it be a world-class offshore fishing adventure or a relaxing evening of fishing in the surf with friends and family, South Carolina offers unparalleled opportunities for recreational saltwater anglers. Without question, both local anglers and tourists who travel to our state from around the country utilize public beaches in Georgetown County for fishing, which results in a significant contribution to the local economy.

According to a report by the American Sportfishing Association, recreational fishing in South Carolina has a \$2.6 billion economic impact in South Carolina alone.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, this same report estimates that recreational anglers in the 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District have a \$431 million economic impact, which generates \$30 million in state and local taxes.

A blanket ban on surf fishing altogether during the peak of tourist season is unfair to all those who fish in Georgetown County. If passed, Ordinance Number 25-22 would result in a direct loss of fishing access to our local anglers and the many tourists that frequent our renowned beaches in hopes of a quality fishing experience. It is undeniable that an overarching ban on surf fishing would

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<sup>1</sup> *South Carolina*. ASA. (2025, March 6). <https://asafishing.org/state-reports/economic-impacts-of-recreational-fishing-south-carolina/>

penalize law-abiding anglers. Additionally, Ordinance Number 25-22 would result in a direct loss of fishing license sales, leading to a loss of conservation funding for South Carolina while simultaneously leading to a significant loss of local revenue that anglers generate from purchasing bait, gear, food, transportation, and lodging.

In conclusion, we oppose Ordinance Number 25-22 as written and encourage you to work closely with local and state leaders to develop a reasonable, science-based proposal that prioritizes public safety without unnecessarily penalizing South Carolina's beach fishing heritage.

Sincerely,

Senator Stephen Goldfinch  
Co-Chair, South Carolina Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus

Senator Russell Ott  
Co-Chair, South Carolina Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus

Representative Heather Bauer  
Co-Chair, South Carolina Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus

Representative Bobby J. Cox  
Co-Chair, South Carolina Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus