



November 18, 2025

The Honorable Harriet Hageman
Chair
Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and
Fisheries
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Val Hoyle
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife, and
Fisheries
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Chair Hageman and Ranking Member Hoyle,

In advance of the Subcommittee's November 19, 2025, legislative hearing, the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF) would like to offer our strong support for three bills before the Subcommittee.

The Fisheries Data Modernization and Accuracy Act of 2025 (H.R. 5699) will address a fundamental shortcoming of federal marine fisheries management, which is the ability to obtain reliable recreational catch estimates. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) is the federal recreational data collection program that was designed to provide trends in recreational catch and effort over time for multiple species and across a broad geographic area. However, MRIP's two-month sampling waves were never intended for real time, in-season management of any one species. The program's inability to collect reliable, timely catch data is the primary reason for many needlessly short recreational seasons or, conversely, exceeding the recreational quota in some years.

H.R. 5699 will facilitate the establishment or improvement of more efficient and accurate state-based data collection systems that can effectively supplement or replace MRIP. For coastal states unable to develop their own data collection programs, the bill will establish a mechanism for scientific review of MRIP estimates and methodologies when the quality of recreational catch data fails to meet NOAA's own data standards. In addition, the bill promotes additional fishery-independent surveys to achieve more reliable, real time estimates of stock abundance to update stock assessments and facilitate timely management adjustments.

H.R. 1514, the Mississippi River Basin Fishery Commission Act of 2025, would establish a much needed and long overdue fisheries commission under the Department of the Interior to coordinate interjurisdictional fishery resources and management across 31 states and Tribes in the Mississippi River basin. While participation in the Commission is voluntary and non-binding, current fisheries challenges within the basin, along with the opportunities for enhancing the Mississippi River's aquatic ecosystem health, will result in an effective and engaged Commission that will be able to more strategically allocate resources where they are needed most.

The FISH Act of 2025 (H.R. 3756) seeks to address the continued challenge of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) commercial fishing that significantly threatens local and global fish stocks and weakens America's seafood competitiveness. Both recreational anglers and commercial fishermen have made substantial sacrifices to ensure that we have healthy, sustainable fisheries off our shores. Illegal harvest of U.S. managed fish in U.S. waters, as well as unsustainable fishing practices for highly migratory species that cross international borders, threaten the progress we have made in restoring and enhancing fish populations domestically and our ability to access those fisheries recreationally.

In closing, these pieces of legislation are important to the nation's anglers. CSF sincerely appreciates the Subcommittee for scheduling a hearing on these bills, and we urge the full House Committee on Natural Resources to report each favorably during the next timely Committee business meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Chris Horton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senior Director
Fisheries Policy