



S. 2184 and H.R. 4208 ***Strengthening the Mid-Atlantic's fisheries and fishing communities***

Sens. John Kerry (D-MA), Olympia J. Snowe (R-ME), and three other senators introduced S. 2184 on March 12. A companion bill (H.R. 4208) was introduced on March 19 in the House by Reps. Barney Frank (D-MA), Frank Guinta (R-NH), and eight other representatives.

This new legislation would re-direct existing revenues from duties on imported fish products (estimated at \$124 million for FY 2013) to support critical research, monitoring, and management programs, as well as provide assistance to fishermen and fishing communities.

This bill would create a regionally-based grant program that would direct 70 percent of the money (approximately \$85 million in FY 2013) per year to fund fisheries research and management programs. The regional fishery management councils would establish investment committees responsible for identifying funding priorities and making recommendations on which specific projects should be supported in each region. The remaining 30% of funds would be used by the Secretary of Commerce for special fisheries needs and problems, including up to 10 percent for the NOAA general operating fund.

“From striped bass and bluefish to summer flounder, here in the Mid-Atlantic we’re enjoying the benefits of improved management of our fisheries resources. Stronger, healthier fish stocks mean tighter lines, happier clients, and more great seafood delivering billions of dollars up and down the coast. This bill will help build on our success, and ensure good fishing for generations.”
Steve Bechard, Owner/President of Rise Fishing Co.

Stronger Mid-Atlantic fisheries and fishing communities

With most of the region’s federally-managed fish stocks at healthy levels, the Mid-Atlantic is now enjoying the benefits of improved management of its commercial and recreational fisheries, including steadily increasing fishing opportunities for important species such as summer flounder. Funding through this bill could help the Mid Atlantic build upon its management successes and address needs going forward, including:

Needs	Examples of Programs Eligible for Funding under S. 2184/H.R. 4208
Expanded research and assessments to enhance the certainty of management decisions	Stock surveys, assessments and analyses
More accurate and timely information on recreational catch.	Improvements to recreational fishing data collection systems including MRFSS/MRIP
Selective fishing gear and other technologies to avoid capture of non-target wildlife (e.g., river herring)	Conservation engineering technologies and methods (e.g., environmentally friendly gear)
Restoration of important watersheds (e.g., Chesapeake Bay)	Habitat restoration and protection
Better incorporation of fishermen’s knowledge and expertise into fisheries research and management	Cooperative fisheries research

This bill would restore the original intent of a law designed to invest directly in U.S. fisheries through revenues from duties on fish products. Since 1979, the majority of these funds have been diverted into the general operating account of NOAA. By directing these funds back to their original fishery management purposes, S. 2184/H.R. 4208 would bolster our nation's commercial and recreational fisheries, which support an estimated 1 million jobs. This bill makes good economic *and* environmental sense.

For more information, please contact:

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For additional resources, visit us at www.EndOverfishing.org.