

September 18, 2017

Governor Charlie Baker
Office of the Governor
24 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Baker,

Recreational fishing is a vital part of the culture and economy of Massachusetts enjoyed by 530,000 residents and supports 7,000 jobs having an \$830-million impact on the state's economy. Strong and healthy sportfishing activity is possible only if there is enough food in the water to support large populations of highly sought after sportfish such as striped bass, bluefish, and summer flounder.

Menhaden are a primary source of food for sportfish and other sea life throughout Massachusetts' coastal waters and also play a uniquely important role in improving water quality. When there are more menhaden in the water, anglers enjoy better opportunities. Under Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) is developing an ecosystem based model that will manage this fish for its important role as a forages species; but it will take a minimum of four years before that ecosystems-based approach is fully implemented.

In the interim, recreational anglers and the recreational fishing industry strongly support Option E in Amendment 3. This option would put into place a scientifically sound model for managing forage fish like menhaden now without having to wait four years until the ASMFC ecosystem based model is finalized. Interim ecological management is critical to protecting healthy menhaden stocks and ensuring the health of Massachusetts' coastal communities that rely on recreational fishing as part of their economic base.

The undersigned sportfishing conservation groups represent millions of sportsmen across the country and are asking that you encourage your state representatives on the ASMFC to support strong and sustainable saltwater recreational fishing in your state by voting yes to Option E of Amendment 3 at the upcoming ASMFC meeting in November.

Sincerely,

American Sportfishing Association
BoatU.S.
Bonefish & Tarpon Trust
Center for Sportfishing Policy
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Fly Fishers International
International Game Fish Association
Izaak Walton League of America
National Marine Manufacturers Association
National Professional Anglers Association
National Wildlife Federation
Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association
Snook & Gamefish Foundation

Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

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