

KEAN, ADLER SUPPORT PALLONE EFFORT TO ENSURE FLEXIBILITY AND FAIRNESS IN FISHERY MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION

SEASIDE HEIGHTS, NJ – Senators Sean Kean and John H. Adler today pledged support for Congressman Frank Pallone’s efforts to ensure flexibility and fairness in federal fish conservation guidelines, and announced that they will introduce a resolution in the State Senate to call for action on Congressman Pallone’s bill.

“Fishing is essential to maintaining our quality of life and our economic well being,” said Senator Kean, R-Monmouth. “This bill would provide necessary flexibility to strike a balance between the need to preserve our fishing industry and the obligation to prevent the depletion of our marine fisheries.”

“Commercial and recreational fishing is the lifeblood of the Jersey Shore,” said Senator Adler, D-Cherry Hill. “So much of the Shore’s economy is tied into the fishing industry. We need rational, science-based guidelines for fish management, so that our State’s fishermen aren’t limited by bureaucracy and red tape.”

Congressman Pallone’s bill would amend federal guidelines for fishery management which were established to prevent overfishing of certain depleted fish species. Specifically, the bill would amend the Magnuson-Stevens Act, which establishes catch limits for a period of 10 years on certain species, if it is determined by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) that the species might be in danger. Under Congressman Pallone’s bill, the Secretary of Commerce would have greater authority to allow limited flexibility in catch limits if the biology of the stock of fish can support such flexibility.

Catch limits have become a controversial area of public policy in communities which rely heavily on revenue from seasonal fishing. Specifically, in New Jersey, catch limits have greatly impacted the economy centered around the fishing of summer flounder, or fluke. Congressman Pallone’s bill would ensure that catch limits are based on up-to-date scientific data, not arbitrary legislative deadlines, so that communities which depend on fishing revenue are not hurt by fishing limitations when there’s no current basis for catch limits.

“For too long fishermen have been negatively impacted by the arbitrary decisions of Washington bureaucrats,” said Senator Kean. “This resolution offers our strong support for efforts to revamp the way our fisheries are managed.”

“When fisheries in a given region are running low, the government absolutely has an obligation to step in,” said Senator Adler. “Conservation is a worthy goal, but when unwarranted limitations are in place, they have a real impact on the wallets of local business owners. Congressman Pallone’s bill will provide the sort of flexibility and monitoring

needed to make sure that unnecessary catch limits aren't a burden on fisherman and the economy that relies on them.”

Senator Kean's and Senator Adler's resolution, SR-XX, will be formally introduced in the State Senate on Thursday, February 14.

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