COMMITTEE REPORT

April 18, 2012

**H. 4984**

Introduced by Reps. Pitts, White, Funderburk and Harrell

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Read the first time March 21, 2012.

**THE COMMITTEE ON FISH, GAME AND FORESTRY**

To whom was referred a Concurrent Resolution (H. 4984) to memorialize the Congress of the United States to enact without delay H.R. 3061, the “Flexibility in Rebuilding American Fisheries Act of 2011” which, among other, etc., respectfully

**REPORT:**

That they have duly and carefully considered the same and recommend that the same do pass:

RONNIE W. CROMER for Committee.

**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO MEMORIALIZE THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES TO ENACT WITHOUT DELAY H.R. 3061, THE “FLEXIBILITY IN REBUILDING AMERICAN FISHERIES ACT OF 2011” WHICH, AMONG OTHER PROVISIONS, EXTENDS THE TIME PERIOD FOR REBUILDING CERTAIN OVERFISHED FISHERIES, REQUIRES BETTER INFORMATION TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF FEDERAL FISHERIES.

Whereas, in 2006, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act was amended by Congress to include tough, inflexible mandates that require regional fishery management councils and the United States Secretary of Commerce to end overfishing immediately and rebuild fisheries in ten years or less and implement Annual Catch Limits; and

Whereas, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended, has resulted in fishery management measures adopted by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) and the United States Secretary of Commerce, such as fishery closures and drastic catch reductions, that are having unacceptable and unnecessary socioeconomic impacts on fishermen and coastal businesses in South Carolina; and

Whereas, H.R. 3061, the “Flexibility in Rebuilding American Fisheries Act of 2011”, has been introduced in the United States House of Representatives to amend the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to allow, among other provisions, regional fishery councils and the United States Secretary of Commerce the needed flexibility to implement fishery rebuilding plans that may exceed ten years in length under certain circumstances, the Secretary of Commerce to suspend application of Annual Catch Limits if a fish stock is either rebuilt or deemed not overfished, or when the level of uncertainty in the data is not consistent with National Standard 8 (best available science), and require regional fishery councils to submit annual socioeconomic impact statements about fishery management decisions to the Secretary of Commerce for development of mitigation plans; and

Whereas, recreational and commercial saltwater fishing is vital to the coastal economy of South Carolina and employs thousands of state residents directly and indirectly; and

Whereas, according to a 2008 University of South Carolina study, coastal tourism in South Carolina had a total annual economic impact of over seven billion dollars, employed nearly eighty-one thousand South Carolinians, and generated over two billion dollars in salary and wages; and

Whereas, according to a 2006 American Sportfishing Association study, South Carolina ranked fifth among all states for nonresident expenditures on recreational fishing with over three hundred fifty million dollars spent annually; and

Whereas, according to a 2006 American Sportfishing Association study, saltwater recreational fishing in South Carolina had a total annual economic impact of over one and a half billion dollars, employed nearly twelve thousand South Carolinians, generated over three hundred thirty-three million dollars in salary and wages, and generated over three hundred million dollars in tax revenues; and

Whereas, according to a 2008 University of South Carolina study, commercial fishing in South Carolina had a total annual economic impact of nearly thirty-four million dollars, employed nearly seven hundred South Carolinians, and generated nearly thirteen million dollars in salary and wages; and

Whereas, for the above reasons, the South Carolina General Assembly supports passage of H.R. 3061, the “Flexibility in Rebuilding American Fisheries Act of 2011”. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly memorialize the Congress of the United States to enact without delay H.R. 3061, the “Flexibility in Rebuilding American Fisheries Act of 2011”.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the South Carolina Congressional Delegation, South Carolina department of Natural Resources, and South Carolina representatives to the South Atlantic Regional Fishery Management Council.

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