

BRADLEY BYRNE  
1ST DISTRICT, ALABAMA

SERVING BALDWIN, CLARKE,  
ESCAMBIA, MOBILE, MONROE AND  
WASHINGTON COUNTIES

HOUSE COMMITTEES:  
ARMED SERVICES  
EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

Washington, DC 20515

February 4, 2019

Mr. Chris Oliver, Assistant Administrator  
NOAA Fisheries  
1315 East West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dr. Roy Crabtree, Regional Administrator  
NOAA Fisheries  
Southeast Regional Office  
263 13th Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Dear Mr. Oliver and Dr. Crabtree:

I was pleased to see the draft rule to increase the Red Snapper Annual Catch Limit (ACL) and Annual Catch Targets issued by NOAA late last year. Your efforts continue to show exactly what those of us on the Gulf Coast have known for years: the health of the Red Snapper fishery is incredibly strong. With that, I write today in support of Alabama's 2019 Red Snapper season. As you are well aware, fishermen along the Gulf Coast have faced increasingly short fishing seasons for Red Snapper.

As with the Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) you approved in 2018 that also covers this upcoming 2019 season, I encourage you to approve Alabama's 2019 EFP Updated Terms and Conditions which will allow for the monitoring of in-season daily Red Snapper landings to maximize season length and benefit anglers, while ensuring harvests stay within set limits. I have always been an advocate for states using innovative methods to manage local fisheries and encourage you to grant Alabama's application. Approving the 2019 terms and conditions would be consistent with congressional intent, as authored by Senator Richard Shelby in the Fiscal Year 2017 and 2018 Appropriations bills, directing the National Marine Fisheries Service to implement a state-led pilot program to allow states to take the lead in managing Red Snapper.

I enjoy working with you and am grateful for the Department's help with the 2017 and 2018 Red Snapper seasons. Given the Red Snapper stock in the Gulf of Mexico is healthy and continues to grow, I hope you will approve the Alabama 2019 EFP Updated Terms and Conditions with the increased ACL to allow fishermen access to the fishery. Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Bradley Byrne  
Member of Congress