

AMERICA'S FISHERMEN AND SEAFOOD PRODUCERS APPLAUD SEAFOOD PROVISIONS IN FARM BILL FRAMEWORK

The provisions in the Farm Bill Framework recently released by the Republicans on the Senate Agriculture Committee recognize the importance of the seafood industry as food producers and a critical part of our nation's food security.

WASHINGTON, DC—This week, Republicans on the Senate Agriculture Committee released their Farm Bill framework with several seafood-related provisions. As the largest national commercial fishing and processor association, the Seafood Harvesters of America appreciates the framework's recognition of the seafood industry's needs and challenges, and thank Ranking Member Boozman for his tireless efforts to address our key priorities, including traveling to Alaska to hear directly from seafood harvesters and producers.

The release of this framework and its seafood-related language is a strong signal of support from the Committee and we look forward to continuing our work with the rest of the Agriculture Committee members in both chambers to ensure these provisions are included in any final legislative language.

"We are extremely grateful for the outreach and efforts of the Senate Agriculture Committee to assist the seafood industry at a time when we are facing unprecedented challenges around the country. This framework recognizes our role in providing fellow Americans with one of the most sustainable, healthiest, low-carbon footprint proteins on the planet. We are proud of our role as food producers and stewards of our marine resources and we thank the Senate Agriculture Republicans for their work to champion our needs."

– Leigh Habegger, Executive Director, Seafood Harvesters of America

"This is progress where fishermen need it most – access to resources that support infrastructure stability and market access. We have worked tirelessly over four decades to build science into the heart of our management which has resulted in our ability to rebuild fish stocks, maintain healthy oceans, and harvest a sustainable, delicious protein for all. Partnership with the USDA helps to ensure the incredible ocean resources that we bring to shore make it to market, to American school children, and to our neighbors' plates. It means harvesters and supply chain partners can build and maintain the infrastructure we need so that we may continue as a resilient and foundational part of America's food supply many generations from now."

– Chris Brown, President, Seafood Harvesters of America

“Across the U.S., coastal communities are coping with crumbling port infrastructure, major processing sector shakeups, and rapidly increasing costs of essential supplies and services. When our core waterfront resources are unstable, so are America’s fishing businesses and seafood-dependent food systems. These Farm Bill inclusions are a tangible commitment to shore up the resources that will keep us resilient, particularly the access to affordable credit and the investigation of processing expansion in coastal communities.”

– *Hannah Heimbuch, Vice President, Seafood Harvesters of America*

“There are some truly critical and hopeful changes in this legislation. Not just for seafood-dependent businesses, but for America’s food producers overall. It’s fantastic to see an ongoing commitment to incorporate more domestic seafood as a part of a nutritious U.S. school lunch program. Sourcing America’s food resources from our own producers is a win-win-win for food security, economies and sustainable production.”

– *Jon Gonzalez, Pacific Seafood*

“Establishing a dedicated seafood staff within the USDA is a game changer. This is someone that can help the seafood industry navigate the resources of the USDA, and help the agency understand the needs of fishing and seafood-dependent businesses. It’s a promising step toward real inclusion and support within America’s food systems.”

– *Buddy Guindon, Executive Director, Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders’ Alliance*