

May 1, 2008

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.  
U.S. House of Representatives  
237 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Congressman Pallone:

The National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA), the nation's leading recreational marine industry trade association, is pleased to offer its support H.R. 5425, the Flexibility in Rebuilding American Fisheries Act of 2008. HR 5425 seeks to attain a balanced approach to fisheries management, allowing a limited increase of flexibility in the law for stocks on a positive rebuilding trend in order to avoid undue economic hardship on the recreational fishing community.

NMMA represents nearly 1,700 boat builders, engine manufacturers, and marine accessory manufacturers who collectively produce more than 80 percent of all recreational marine products made in the United States. With almost 73 million boaters nationwide, the recreational boating industry is a major consumer goods industry with expenditures on recreational marine products and services of \$39.5 billion in 2006 alone.

NMMA has long recognized the strong relationship between recreational boating and fishing. The recreational boating industry has a strong interest in and proactively seeks policies that conserve, protect and enhance important recreational fisheries while maintaining public access to sport fishing. Unfortunately, it is becoming apparent that current federal fisheries laws will become increasingly restrictive for recreational anglers even as many managed stocks are at high—and, in some cases, historically high—abundance and are in positive rebuilding periods. Consequently, in many cases current law may have undue negative economic impacts for sport anglers and their support industries.

Healthy, abundant fish stocks are the essential element of a positive fishing experience. It is therefore imperative that the nation's overfished fisheries rebuild and achieve sustainable abundance in a timely way. National fisheries policy must be based on sound science and fisheries managers should be empowered to pursue management strategies that work toward robust and effective conservation while at the same time minimizing, where possible, adverse social and economic impacts on the regulated community. NMMA believes H.R. 5425, sponsored by U.S. Representative Frank Pallone of New Jersey, strikes this important balance.

**Executive Committee**

Chairman, NMMA  
Chuck Rowe  
Indmar Products, Inc.

Vice Chairman, NMMA  
David Slikkers  
Tiara Yachts  
Secretary, NMMA  
Kris Carroll  
Grady-White Boats

Treasurer, NMMA  
Rick Russell  
Anderson Marine Division  
Member At-Large  
George Bellwoar  
PERKO, Inc.

BMD Representative  
J.J. Marie  
Zodiac of North America  
EMD Representative  
Jim Hubbard  
Mercury Marine

AMD Representative  
Jason Pajonk  
Taylor Made Products  
President  
Thomas J. Damrrich  
NMMA

NMMA appreciates your leadership and the leadership of the cosponsors of H.R. 5425 on this and other important natural resource issues. Please do not hesitate to contact Mathew Dunn of my staff at [mdunn@nmma.org](mailto:mdunn@nmma.org) if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Scott B. Gudes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line underneath.

Scott B. Gudes  
Vice President, Government Relations

CC: The Honorable Henry Brown  
The Honorable Barney Frank  
The Honorable Robert E. Andrews  
The Honorable Timothy H. Bishop  
The Honorable Jo Bonner  
The Honorable Thelma D. Drake  
The Honorable Luis G. Fortuno  
The Honorable Vito Fossella  
The Honorable Walter B. Jones, Jr.  
The Honorable Patrick J. Kennedy  
The Honorable Peter T. King  
The Honorable Nick Lampson  
The Honorable Frank A. LoBiondo  
The Honorable Solomon P. Ortiz  
The Honorable Ron Paul  
The Honorable James T. Walsh