

expenses such as books, lesson materials, math flash cards, crayons, and countless other items that help children learn. H.R. 6111 provides teachers with tax relief that will help defray the significant out-of-pocket cost of educational items for their students and classrooms.

Regarding clean energy, this legislation will extend tax credits for renewable electricity production from sources such as wind, biomass, and landfill gas. It will also extend incentives for commercial and residential use of solar power. Greater tax credits and deductions will help lessen the higher costs typically associated with these types of clean energy. These incentives will also help expand consumer acceptance of renewable energy. And, without consumer demand, businesses are reluctant to develop the technologies to harness these energy sources. H.R. 6111 will extend current tax policies that will foster the development and use of clean energy.

I appreciate Chairman THOMAS' hard work in bringing this legislation to the floor. His skill and dedication to putting together good tax policy will be missed. It has been an honor serving with him on the House Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to vote in favor of H.R. 6111 and am confident that these incentives will help more Americans keep more of what they earn while further stimulating our already robust national economy.

MAGNUSON-STEVENS FISHERY
CONSERVATION AND MANAGE-
MENT REAUTHORIZATION ACT
OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. JAY INSLEE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5946, a bill to reauthorize the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. This bill is critically important as it will improve the management of our Nation's fisheries, providing a better future for tomorrow. Among other things, the bill ensures that the role of science in the fishery management decision-making process requires annual harvest limits at sustainable levels for virtually all U.S. fisheries and sets out a clear process for ending overfishing where it is occurring. These strict conservation measures are already in effect in the fisheries of the northwest—I am pleased that our management successes will now be replicated in all other regions.

Another key advancement for our Nation's fisheries in this bill is Congress' clarification that certain processes going through the Council process currently will not be negatively affected by the positive changes in current law. Specifically, the cap and trade systems will improve the economics of fishing and enhance the safety of our fishing fleets. Our existing cap and trade programs for sulfur dioxide—which have cut down on acid rain—are being replicated within our fisheries management systems. These programs have helped in curbing some of the effects of global warming, they will now improve fisheries conservation.

I am also pleased that the new legislation will not disrupt the ongoing efforts by the Pacific Fishery Management Council to enhance the management of its ground fish fisheries. The Pacific Council is working diligently to develop a cap and trade or "rationalization" program for its ground fish fisheries. This process has been underway for more than 3 years, and is nearing completion. While the bill requires the Pacific Council to implement an appropriate ground fish management program within 24 months from the date of enactment, and to meet other requirements in law, it does not require the Pacific Council to begin anew in developing that program.

Yet another important provision included in this legislation will create a study on the effects of ocean acidification within the National Research Council. Research into the impacts of high concentrations of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the oceans is in its infancy and needs to be developed rapidly. This study is a first step in understanding the problems our oceans will face.

The provisions included in this bill requiring the scientific and statistical committees to provide Councils with recommendations for allowable biological catch, preventing overfishing and achieving rebuilding targets are perhaps the most important. I will be closely following the performances of the regional fisheries councils, their decisions regarding harvest, and their operation and utilization of their respective scientific and statistical committees, as well as the council's use of their scientific and statistical committees' recommendations.

The oceans are absorbing CO₂ from the atmosphere and this is causing chemical changes by making the oceans more acidic (that is, decreasing the pH of the oceans). In the past 200 years the oceans have absorbed approximately half of the CO₂ produced by fossil fuel burning and cement production. Future generations will benefit greatly from the governments research into this subject.

Reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act is a positive step on the road to the healthy management of our ocean systems. I look forward to working with the Resources Committee in the 110th Congress on other positive steps to ensure that our oceans are safe and healthy for future generations.

MAGNUSON-STEVENS FISHERY
CONSERVATION AND MANAGE-
MENT REAUTHORIZATION ACT
OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to revise and extend my remarks. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The pending measure, as passed by the Senate, may be one of the last items on our schedule this Congress, but it is certainly not the least important. The bill would reauthorize the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act in order to guide the management of our marine fisheries through 2013.

We would not be here today if Senators TED STEVENS and DANIEL INOUE had not extended

an olive branch. I am extremely appreciative of the hard work that they and their staffs put into this legislation. I also commend our colleague TOM ALLEN who worked tirelessly on behalf of the fishermen in his district to improve this legislation.

While the pending measure does not do everything I would have liked, it does not roll back the conservation principles in this important fisheries management law. The legislation actually strengthens the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

For the first time, regional fishery management councils will be required to establish catch limits that may not exceed the recommendations of the councils' scientific and statistical committees. We expect the scientific committees are to take into account a wide range of scientific opinions when making their recommendations.

Members of the scientific committees will be required to file financial disclosure forms with the Secretary. This requirement will enable the general public to use the Freedom of Information Act to ascertain whether the scientists are truly independent.

For the most depleted fisheries in our country, the legislation will require the Secretary of Commerce to prepare and implement a rebuilding plan that puts an end to overfishing immediately. This is a significant improvement in the law. Studies have shown that the clearest cause of the lack of progress in rebuilding is the failure of many plans to reduce overfishing on those critically depleted stocks. H.R. 5946 addresses this concern.

Notwithstanding efforts by this Congress to undermine the National Environmental Policy Act, H.R. 5946, as amended, requires full compliance with the law. The Secretary of Commerce is directed to update the procedures for complying with NEPA, but these new procedures will not supercede existing NEPA regulations and guidance issued by the Council on Environmental Quality.

Additionally, H.R. 5946 places a 10-year limit on permits, known as limited access privileges, which are issued to fishermen to harvest a quantity of fish. On this issue, I commend our colleague TOM ALLEN, who worked to ensure that the limited access privilege program conserves fisheries, is accountable, and protects small fishermen from those who would like to consolidate fisheries. The privileges are to be held by fishermen who are actively engaged and substantially participate in the fishery. The regional fishery associations are to maintain free and open markets for fishermen to sell their catch, and are not to force fishermen into unwilling or involuntary arrangements.

H.R. 5946 also encourages the conservation of coral reefs. The bill directs the Secretary to map the locations of deep sea corals for the councils, monitor activity occurring where deep sea corals exist, and develop technologies to assist fishermen in reducing the interactions that fishing gear has with corals.

Finally, the bill authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to undertake activities to reduce illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in international waters. This will assist domestic fishermen who bear the costs when fish harvested illegally result in degraded fish stocks and depressed prices worldwide.

In summary, H.R. 5946 will promote the conservation of our fisheries. The bill does not include everything on my wish list, but it improves upon existing law.