

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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SENATE RESOLUTION 370

Sponsors: Senators Rabon (Primary Sponsor); Cook and Horner.

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

March 27, 2017

1 A SENATE RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE PRIVATIZATION OF SOUTH ATLANTIC
2 FEDERAL FISHERY RESOURCES THROUGH CATCH SHARE MANAGEMENT
3 AND EFFORTS THROUGH EXEMPTED FISHING PERMITS OR OTHER MEANS TO
4 CONDUCT PILOT CATCH SHARE PROGRAMS OR STUDIES.

5 Whereas, "catch share" is a term for fishery management strategies that allocate a
6 specific portion of the total allowable fishery catch to individuals or other entities, effectively
7 giving private ownership of federal fishery resources to individuals and corporations; and

8 Whereas, in 2010, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
9 Fisheries adopted a national catch share policy, which states that "NOAA encourages the
10 consideration and adoption of catch shares wherever appropriate in fishery management and
11 ecosystem plans and their amendments, and will support the design, implementation, and
12 monitoring of catch share programs"; and

13 Whereas, private ownership of federal fishery resources through catch share
14 programs nationally has caused significant consolidation of fishing fleets, reducing access to
15 the resource and causing significant fishing job losses to the detriment of fishing communities
16 and the coastal economy; and

17 Whereas, a 2013 report by the Center for Investigative Reporting provides estimates
18 that as many as 18,000 fishing jobs were lost and 3,700 vessels were no longer fishing in areas
19 that had catch share programs, with those numbers being likely much higher now; and

20 Whereas, this year, a WVUE-TV, New Orleans, investigative report into the Gulf of
21 Mexico commercial red snapper fishery catch share program stated that just "50 businesses and
22 fishermen control 81% of the commercial red snapper allocation," causing many fishermen to
23 lose access to the fishery or forcing them to pay exorbitant prices to buy or rent red snapper
24 shares so they can remain employed in the fishery; and

25 Whereas, a 2013 NOAA study of the impacts of catch shares on southern New
26 England fishermen and families found that 70% said they were "worse/much worse off" with
27 catch shares; and

28 Whereas, fishery stakeholders in North Carolina and the South Atlantic are
29 overwhelmingly opposed to catch share programs in federal waters as evidenced by 97% of the
30 comments on the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's long-range snapper-grouper
31 fishery management plan being opposed to any form of catch shares; and

32 Whereas, studies by the Lenfest Ocean Program and reports by Food and Water
33 Watch and others have shown that catch share programs provide no biological benefit or
34 enhanced sustainability to fisheries; and

35 Whereas, saltwater fishing is economically very important to North Carolina, with
36 recreational and commercial fishing in 2014 generating \$1,500,000,000 and \$115,000,000 in
37 sales and supporting 16,007 and 3,220 jobs respectively, according to NOAA; Now, therefore,
38 Be it resolved by the Senate:



1 **SECTION 1.** That members of the Senate, by this resolution, oppose the use of
2 catch share fisheries management in federal waters off North Carolina and in the South Atlantic
3 and any efforts through exempted fishing permits or other means to conduct pilot catch share
4 programs or studies.

5 **SECTION 2.** The Principal Clerk shall transmit copies of this resolution to the
6 South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, NOAA Fisheries, and the North Carolina Marine
7 Fisheries Commission.

8 **SECTION 3.** This resolution is effective upon adoption.