



**AMERICAN
SPORTFISHING
ASSOCIATION**

January 12, 2026

The Honorable Pete Stauber
Chair
Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral
Resources
House Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Yassamin Ansari
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral
Resources
House Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Stauber and Ranking Member Ansari:

On behalf of the American Sportfishing Association (ASA), the trade association representing the nation's recreational fishing industry, I write to express our strong support for the Marine Fisheries Habitat Protection Act (H.R. 5745) and to thank the House Natural Resources Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee for holding a hearing on this important legislation. We appreciate the Subcommittee's leadership and attention to measures that directly support marine habitat conservation, sustainable fisheries and the recreational fishing community.

The Marine Fisheries Habitat Protection Act offers a pragmatic approach to enhancing and preserving critical marine habitat by creating a clear, efficient process for converting retired offshore oil and gas platforms and pipelines into permanent artificial reefs. The bill recognizes the ecological and economic benefits that well-sited artificial reefs provide, including enhanced biodiversity, improved fishing opportunities and strengthened coastal economies.

This bill builds upon existing reefing programs and creates a more effective pathway to convert former energy infrastructure to benefit marine ecosystems and the fishing community. Offshore oil and gas platforms are among the most popular and productive fishing sites, but have been disappearing at an alarming rate because in many cases there is not an efficient regulatory mechanism to convert them to artificial reef structures. The Marine Fisheries Habitat Protection Act is a well-crafted solution to ensure these structures safely remain in place to continue providing ecosystem benefits that support the nation's \$74 billion saltwater recreational fishing economy.

We thank the Subcommittee for its consideration of H.R. 5745 and for providing a forum to examine how this bill can advance marine habitat conservation. ASA stands ready to work with the Subcommittee and Members of Congress to advance this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Leonard".

Mike Leonard
Vice President of Government Affairs

American Sportfishing Association

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