

Responses to Questions from Rep. Carl

1. I have been deeply involved with issues surrounding the Great Red Snapper Count and the calibration of fisheries data. It has become increasingly clear to me that the management of these processes should be left to the states. Mr. Graves' bill is a significant step forward in achieving this goal. It empowers states to create their own recreational fishery catch data collection programs, with NOAA being required to utilize the state-collected data. I have told NOAA that the state has done a fantastic job monitoring snapper season.

With this context, Ms. Guyas, in your testimony you emphasized the significance of the Great Red Snapper Count as a model for third-party abundance surveys that can inform management decisions, along with similar studies currently underway.

Could you expand on ways that you think NOAA could more effectively incorporate studies like the Great Red Snapper Count into management decisions?

Studies like the Great Red Snapper Count provide opportunities to assess and manage fisheries based on the absolute abundance of fish in a stock. Section 7 of H.R. 8705 would facilitate this by requiring that the National Academies, in consultation with Harte Research Institute, submit a publicly-available report to the Committee on Natural Resources regarding use of Great Red Snapper Count results in fisheries management decisions, as well as recommendations for how to incorporate results of similar studies in management decisions made by the National Marine Fisheries Service.