

**Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries
Legislative Hearing
Wednesday, June 3, 2026, 2:00 p.m.
1324 Longworth House Office Building.**

**Rep. Uifa'atali Amata Radewagen Statement on H.R.8904 –
To amend the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to provide
for the regulation of fishing in marine national monuments.**

Thank you, Chair Hageman and RM Hoyle, for holding this hearing and for the opportunity to discuss my bill HR 8904. This legislation reaffirms the separation of powers of government and aims to prevent abuse of the Antiquities Act to unilaterally regulate fishing – something Congress never intended. Rather, the people, through their representatives in Congress, not the President alone, should collectively decide these legal issues. Science, not politics, is what should matter.

On January 6th, 2009, President Bush established the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument (PRIMNM). On September 29th, 2014, President Obama expanded the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument with Proclamation 9173 and quadrupled its size while removing all fishing in an area half the size of the continental USA.

The American Samoan Government and its people were barely consulted before these monuments were established or expanded. As a result, our local fishermen were barred from accessing the waters that Samoans have been visiting for over a millennium.

Many island economies are often heavily reliant on a single industry and in our case it's the fishing industry. The establishment or expansion of the monuments and the restriction of all local fishing has had a major negative impact on American Samoa.

On April 17, 2025, President Trump issued a Proclamation to reinstate commercial fishing in the PRIMNM; he simply restored the fishing status quo but also kept a historic 50-mile limit from fishing near shore as it previously had been.

The monuments serve a good environmental purpose, and I fully support that effort, but not without oversight, scientific backing, and community input, and certainly not at the expense of our people who have utilized these areas for centuries, long before any relationship with the United States.

My bill aims to correct this by prohibiting fishing regulation of marine national monuments by Presidential Proclamation and reiterating the continued regulation of fishing within marine monuments under existing law as established by the Magnuson Stevens Act (MSA).

The MSA has been the standard for protecting our fisheries for half a century and is the more appropriate tool for regulation instead of arbitrary changes depending on any President. Over the years, it's become apparent that the Antiquities Act is being applied beyond its original intent in order to unfairly target fishing and usurp Congressional power in the process.

The MSA relies on science-backed fishery management plans and regional councils that act with transparency and democratic oversight. Rather than playing political tug-of-war, I believe the balance of stakeholders and scientific experts codified under the MSA is a much-preferred standard to protect our waters.

Thank you again to committee leadership for the opportunity to explore this issue which is so important to the wellbeing of the American Samoan people, and I encourage my colleagues to support my bill.