

WEEKLY UPDATE: 6/30/2017

NORTH CAROLINA FISHERIES ASSOCIATION

"Serving the Commercial Fishing Families of North Carolina since 1952"

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

The General Assembly's 2017 "long session" is now history, as they adjourned after 2:00am on Friday, June 30th. Bottom line is this:

H-867 did not move out of the House Wildlife Resources Committee, which is a very good thing. Despite assurances that it's not going anywhere, it remains in that Committee and can be considered when they reconvene. The "short session" is scheduled to begin in May 2018; however, they are also due to reconvene August 3rd for a brief session, but that will have a narrow focus. They will also meet on September 6th.

Measures that we favored did not pass. There were several items in the Senate version of the budget but were taken out by the House in conference before the final budget was sent to the Governor. Although Governor Cooper vetoed the budget, it was quickly overridden and is now law without the fisheries provisions we wanted.

There was also a House Bill that was amended by the Senate in several ways including some fisheries measures. The House did not agree with those amendments and there was no further action on the bill before they adjourned so it was not passed. The controversial amendments in the bill were much more than fisheries, and would have more than likely been rejected by the House even if all the fish stuff were removed.

While disappointing that we didn't get the needed relief regarding the stacked deck on the Marine Fisheries Commission, it was quite an accomplishment to keep H-867 at bay, given the tremendous push by several organizations and a marketing firm that spent a lot of money and had a number of lobbyists working on it. Much credit goes to those who took the time to attend our Seafood Lobby Day on June 14th at the General Assembly. We should note once again, that of the 200 that attended that day there were quite a few folks who don't fish, but are consumers and don't want their access to fresh seafood to go away. They also look at the issue as one of freedom and they are members of the Coastal Carolina Taxpayer's Association.

Glenn Skinner overheard a legislator telling several lobbyists pushing for 867: "that's about the only way you'll be able to get it done without NCFA knowing about it". We don't know exactly what the legislator was referring to, but it is further evidence as to why we are there.

Once again, given the tremendous push by money and influence to get 867 passed, commercial fishing families should be pleased to know that you have a lot of friends in the General Assembly and not just from the coast. Some of your most vocal advocates are from the west who are only interested in doing the right thing.

While very tiring and frustrating at times, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on behalf of the North Carolina Fisheries Association and commercial fishing families. The frustration level during the past 5 months of the session was especially high, including within our own ranks. More on that at a later time. It was a big help and very refreshing to have Glenn Skinner and Mike Blanton's assistance at times this session, along with Terry Pratt who knows his way around the General Assembly very well.

God bless,
Jerry

NCFA TO HOLD JOINT MEETING

The North Carolina Fisheries Association's July meeting will be a joint meeting with the NC Catch folks to talk about messaging regarding seafood safety, availability and other issues of mutual concern. All NCFA members and those involved with the Catch groups are invited and encouraged to attend.

The meeting will take place on Tuesday, July 11th, beginning at 11:00am at the Riverfront Convention Center in New Bern. For more information, contact NCFA Chairman Brent Fulcher at 252-514-7003 or Glenn Skinner, Executive Director at 252-646-7742.

CHRIS OLIVER SELECTED TO HEAD UP NMFS

Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross, with concurrence from the White House, named Chris Oliver Assistant Administrator for NOAA Fisheries. The Texas native assumed his new position on June 19, taking the helm from Acting Assistant Administrator Samuel Rauch who will return to his position as the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs.

Congratulations to Mr. Oliver who was endorsed by NCFA! You can see the press release here:
[Chris Oliver selected to head up NMFS](#)

DEWEY HEMILRIGHT REPOINTED TO THE MID ATLANTIC COUNCIL

Congratulations to Dewey Hemilright for his reappointment to the Mid Atlantic Fishery Management Council! Dewey is a commercial fisherman from Dare County and very active in fisheries issues, including as a Board Member of NCFA. The press release announcing all 22 appointments can be found here:
[Secretary of Commerce announces Council appointments](#)

CARTERET COUNTY FISHERMAN'S ASSOCIATION NEWS:

Once again Carteret County Fisherman's Association had a very successful fundraising event. On June 24, CCFA sold shrimp burgers and hotdogs at the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum and Heritage Center on Harkers Island in celebration of their 25th Anniversary. We were honored to be their only food vendor. We would like to thank the fishermen and fish houses that very so generous in donating the shrimp. A thank you to the folks that came out to support us, and a special thank you to Kenny Rustick, Paul Biermann, Adam Tyler, Steve Weeks and Aundrea O'Neal for the hours they donated peeling those fresh Core Sound shrimp!

CALENDAR

July 11; NCFA joint meeting; 11:00am; Riverfront Convention Center; New Bern, NC

August 1-3; ASMFC Summer meeting; Alexandria, VA

August 8-10; Mid Atlantic Fishery Management Council; Philadelphia, PA

August 16-17; NC Marine Fisheries Commission; Raleigh, NC