

NCFA UPDATE: 05/08/2020
NORTH CAROLINA FISHERIES ASSOCIATION
"Serving the Commercial Fishing Families of North Carolina since 1952"
PO Box 86; Morehead City, NC 28557
Phone: (252) 726-NCFA (6232) Fax: (252) 726-6200
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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

As noted last week, the primary agenda item for the General Assembly is response to Covid-19. Last week on a Saturday vote, both the Senate and House passed a Covid-19 recovery package with both passing unanimously. The Governor signed the measure this past Monday.

Among other things, the measure provides for extending driver's license and tag expiration deadlines, waive interest payments on state income and business taxes that were normally due in April and spend hundreds of millions of dollars on public schools, vaccine and treatment research, coronavirus testing and contact tracing and a bridge loan program for small businesses.

There was no action on the fisheries bill as it remains in the House Rules Committee.

PRESIDENT TRUMP SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER FOR FISHERIES:

President Donald Trump signed an Executive Order yesterday. NCFA was a participant in a conference call with White House staff announcing the EO.

The first paragraph of the Order includes:

"By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to strengthen the American economy; improve the competitiveness of American industry; ensure food security; provide environmentally safe and sustainable seafood; support American workers; ensure coordinated, predictable, and transparent Federal actions; and remove unnecessary regulatory burdens..."

In today's issue of the Wall Street Journal, there is an op-ed by Joe Grogan and Peter Navarro. Mr. Grogan is assistant to the president for domestic policy and director of the Domestic Policy Council. Mr. Navarro is assistant to the president and director of the Office of Trade and Manufacturing Policy. Their letter includes this:

"The order creates an administrative trade task force to find new markets for American seafood products and identify unfair trade barriers. It also supports industry research, removes unnecessary regulations on commercial fishermen, and streamlines the aquaculture permitting process.

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These reforms will allow producers to make better use of the country's ample resources. The U.S. has one of the world's largest exclusive economic zones, a vast area of ocean in which we have sovereign rights over natural resources. But more than 85% of seafood consumed in the U.S. is imported. U.S. fish farms produce only \$1.5 billion a year, compared with \$140 billion in China. Much foreign seafood comes from fish farms in countries that often fail to meet international standards on health, labor and the environment. Many of China's catfish and tilapia swim in shallow pens with low oxygen levels, polluted by their own waste along with improperly used antibiotics and fungicides. Farmed fish in South America routinely suffer from infectious anemia, algae blooms and sea lice due to poor biosecurity protocols."

You can find the President's Executive Order here:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-promoting-american-seafood-competitiveness-economic-growth/>

It was also announced the allocations for CARES ACT funding. CARES ACT provisions for \$300 million for commercial fishing: Previously Congress passed the CARES ACT with over \$2 trillion in funding to address the negative effects of Covid-19. Included was \$300 million for commercial fishing. However, it's been a very slow process in finding out how the dollars will be distributed. Yesterday, it was announced the allocation by state. As you will see in the chart below, North Carolina was allotted \$5,460,385 or almost \$5.5 million. We knew our share wouldn't come close to addressing the negative effects to our fishermen, which is why we worked on and support H-1045, EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN.

Entity	Allocation of Sec. 12005 Funding
Alaska	\$50,000,000
Washington	\$50,000,000
Massachusetts	\$28,004,176
Florida	\$23,636,600
Maine	\$20,308,513
California	\$18,350,586
Oregon	\$15,982,827
Louisiana	\$14,785,244
New Jersey	\$11,337,797
Texas	\$9,237,949
New York	\$6,750,276
North Carolina	\$5,460,385
Federally Recognized Tribes on the West Coast	\$5,097,501

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