



## New England Fishery Management Council

50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492 | FAX 978 465 3116  
John F. Quinn, J.D., Ph.D., *Chairman* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

### MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** September 9, 2021  
**TO:** Executive Committee  
**FROM:** Tom Nies, Executive Director  
**SUBJECT:** **H.R. 4690 – “Strengthening America’s Fisheries for the Future Act of 2021”**

1. This summer, Congressmen Huffman and Case introduced H.R. 4690, an act to re-authorize the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA). On August 25, 2021, the congressmen requested the feedback on the introduced legislation from the eight regional fishery management councils (document 4A). Our reply is requested by September 30, 2021.
2. H.R. 4690 (document 4B) is nearly 200 pages long. Mr. Dave Whaley, who tracks legislative issues for the Council Coordination Committee (CCC), prepared a summary of the legislation (document 4C) that is easier to digest. For the Executive Committee, I’ve highlighted sections that I believe the Council may want to address. The CCC also plans to provide feedback, but that letter will not be approved until mid-October.
3. At a high level, the legislation would impose a number of new requirements on the Council and the agency. These range from various reports (some required at periodic intervals) to specific items that must be addressed in FMPs or amendments. The additional workload would be difficult for the Council to complete, even if additional resources are provided, because of the time they would take to comply.
4. I suggest the Executive Committee review the legislation summary and identify issues that deserve Council comment. Based on this input, I will prepare a draft letter for the Council’s review and approval at its September meeting.
5. As a reminder, the Council is prohibited from lobbying federal or state legislators. When requested (as is the case for this bill), the Council can educate legislators on the impacts on Council activities of the proposed legislation. The Council should not express support or opposition to the legislation, nor should the Council encourage others to do so. The latter is considered “grassroots lobbying” and is also prohibited.