

**ROBERTT J. WITTMAN**  
1ST DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-4601**

May 4, 2015

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Dr. Louis B. Daniel, III, Chairman  
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC)  
1050 N. Highland Street  
Suite 200 A-N  
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Chairman:

It is my understanding that tomorrow the Atlantic Menhaden Management Board will review a number of key issues, such as whether to adjust to the current harvest quota, the appropriateness of the current reference points and the allocation of the quota to the ASMFC member states.

As you know, the 2014 Atlantic Menhaden Stock Assessment indicates that the status of the Atlantic menhaden population is not overfished; nor is overfishing occurring. The stock assessment results reflect what so many fishermen and environmentalists in my District and in the Commonwealth of Virginia have witnessed, which is that Atlantic menhaden are abundant on the East Coast. The results of this assessment prove that the stock is currently, and even has been, robust for several years and questions the validity of claims made by outside interest groups that menhaden was previously in decline.

I have long been a strong supporter of cooperative menhaden stock research and a proponent of using the best available science to drive fisheries management decisions. I am hopeful that during your discussions the 2014 assessment will provide some assurance to the Board's Chair and ASMFC Commissioners about the health of the Atlantic menhaden stock.

The science ASMFC has developed substantiates that at least a 20 percent increase in the menhaden catch share is appropriate. As the Atlantic Menhaden Management Board begins discussion tomorrow regarding quota specifications and reviews management decisions, I respectfully ask that the Board and ASMFC give a catch share increase for menhaden its due fair and full consideration.

With kind regards, I remain.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Wittman  
Member of Congress

Cc: Robert H. Boyles, Jr., Chair, Atlantic Menhaden Management Board