

October 28, 2022

The Honorable Jack Reed  
Chairman  
Senate Armed Services Committee  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable James Inhofe  
Ranking Member  
Senate Armed Services Committee  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith  
Chairman  
House Armed Services Committee  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael Rogers  
Ranking Member  
House Armed Services Committee  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Rogers,

On behalf of the recreational fishing and boating opportunities.

The nation's 55 million recreational anglers contribute \$128 billion to the economy and support 825,000 jobs. Through federal excise tax on fishing equipment, fuel, license fees, and donations, anglers spend an additional \$1.7 billion on conservation efforts. Conservation and access to vibrant fisheries are essential for anglers.

Artificial reefs enhance the marine ecosystem and establish new fishing opportunities because artificial reefs provide a place for algae and invertebrates, such as sponges, which are a food source for other fish and marine life. These reefs also attract larger predators, many of which are important sportfish. There are many examples of decommissioned vessels being successfully converted into artificial reefs, enhancing the marine environment and becoming valuable fishing destinations.

By requiring reporting to Congress on viable naval vessels for artificial reefs, this legislation will help create new marine ecosystems and recreational fishing opportunities. It is exciting legislation for marine life and anglers, but also for local economies and jobs from the spending power of anglers.

Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,

American Sportfishing Association  
BoatU.S.  
Center for Sportfishing Policy  
Coastal Conservation Association  
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation  
Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation

International Game Fish Association  
National Marine Manufacturers Association  
National Association of Fishermen  
Panama City Boatmen Association  
Theodore Roosevelt Commission  
Wild Oceans