H.R. 3521, the Gulf Red Snapper Data Improvement Act
Sponsor – Congressman Jolly (R- Florida)

Introduced on September 16, 2015

Referred to the House Natural Resources Committee

Section 1 – Short Title.

Section 2 – Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper and Other Reef Fish Species Data Collection Grants. This section would require the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the NMFS Southeast Regional Office, to award competitive grants for fishery-dependent and fishery-independent data collection for use in stock assessments for red snapper and other reef fish in the Gulf of Mexico.

This section would require the Secretary to seek to improve the stock assessment for red snapper and other Gulf reef fish through innovative approaches to data collection that incorporate data from cooperative peer reviewed research involving academia, fishermen, and other fishery sources.

This section would allow grants to be for one or more fiscal years.

Section 3 – Communication with Stakeholders. This section would require the Secretary of Commerce to seek to improve communications by NMFS with stakeholders regarding stock assessment processes and the result of the processes for red snapper and other reef fish species in the Gulf of Mexico.

The bill would require the Secretary of Commerce, within 180 days, to report to Congress on actions taken to improve communications with stakeholders and the results of these actions. The Secretary would be required to update the report every 180 days.

Section 4 – Process for Using Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper and Other Reef Fish Species Cooperative Research Data. The bill would require the Secretary of Commerce, within 180 days, report to Congress on the process for using data collected through cooperative research activities for the red snapper and other reef fish species in the Gulf of Mexico. The Secretary would be required to update the report every 180 days.

Section 5 – Authorization of Appropriations. The bill would authorize $10 million to the Secretary of Commerce for grants, personnel, operations, and data collection to improve stock assessments of red snapper and other reef fish species.