



## CALIFORNIA

**DATE:** March 15, 2017

**TO:** **Honorable James Gallagher**

**FROM:** Ken DeVore, Legislative Director

**RE:** **AB 986 (Gallagher): 12-Month Fishing License/Veteran Discount SUPPORT**

The National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) is pleased to **support AB 986** (Gallagher), which aims to increase fishing participation rates by making a fishing license valid for 12 months. The bill also discounts the license by 25% for military veterans.

Recreational fishing in California contributes over \$4.6 billion in economic activity each year, supporting small businesses, jobs, and generating tax revenue for California communities dependent on outdoor tourism and recreation.

Recreational fishing's economic contribution to California is seriously threatened by a decline in fishing participation that the State can no longer afford to ignore and this is reflected by an unprecedented decline in fishing license sales. In addition to unwarranted restrictions on fishing, the cost of fishing in California has become cost prohibitive and anglers find little value in a fishing license that is not valid for a full 12-month period from the date of purchase.

In 1980, the State of California sold over 2.4 million licenses and at the current rate of decline, projections are that less than 500,000 will be sold in California by 2027. This trend puts jobs at risk as fewer anglers patronize small businesses.

AB 986 will establish a fishing license valid for a full 12-months from the date of purchase, and in addition, discount license fees for California veterans. These reforms are a solid first step to enhancing recreational fishing, but much more needs to be done if a 35-year trend of declining participation is to be reversed soon.

We thank you for introducing AB 986, and encourage the Legislature to pass this measure.

*NFIB, the voice of California small business, represents the consensus views of its 22,000 members.*