



May 30, 2018

The Honorable Senator Tom Berryhill
California State Capitol,
Room 3067
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

Dear Senator Berryhill:

The American Sportfishing Association (ASA) supports Senate Bill 518, which will provide for the opportunity to purchase one-year sportfishing licenses in California. We appreciate your leadership and recognition of the need to increase sportfishing opportunities throughout the state's coastal and inland waters.

ASA is the nation's recreational fishing trade association, representing sportfishing manufacturers, retailers, wholesalers, and angler advocacy groups, as well as the interests of America's 47 million recreational anglers. ASA also safeguards and promotes the social, economic, and conservation values of sportfishing in America, which result in a \$115 billion-a-year impact on the nation's economy. California is home to over 100 of our members and ranks fifth in the nation in the number of anglers.

SB 518 would address one of the reasons that angling in California is declining. The price and accessibility of fishing licenses is an important factor in falling participation rates. This bill would ensure that purchase of a one year license provides access to fishing in California for one year from the date of purchase, the same method that is followed in fishing friendly states, such as Florida. California fishing licenses are among the most expensive in the United States, and it seems more than appropriate that an angler paying the annual fee be able to have the benefit of fishing for a full twelve months.

Recreational fishing provides the opportunity for youth and families to bond while experiencing the outdoors. In fact, anglers are the most ardent supporters of conservation and resource management. It is anglers and boaters who carry the financial burden for most state conservation programs in this country (\$1.2 billion annually from user fees and excise taxes). Anglers are more environmentally aware than the general population as they are those on the water closest to the state's natural resources. Fishing provides clean recreational fun and quality of life for Californians and visitors to the state from fly fishing for trout in the Sierra Nevada to fishing kelp paddies for Yellowtail off San Diego.

Sportfishing *also* is about jobs and California's economy. According to the U.S. Census/Fish and Wildlife Service data, in 2011 alone fresh and saltwater sportfishing accounted for approximately 36,000 jobs in California with salaries and wages of almost \$1.6 billion per year. Retail sales from recreational fishing are estimated to have created almost \$4.6 billion in economic activity with state and local government in California collecting \$334 million in revenue.

AMERICAN SPORTFISHING ASSOCIATION

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Californians and tourists visiting the state need access to enjoy our sport. The waning participation in recreational fishing will have negative short- and long-term consequences for California. The first step to reverse this trend is to provide affordable access for men and women in the state who want to fish. The goal for any state including California should be to improve access and ease to enjoy the sportfishing experience. SB 518, if enacted, will have an immediate and positive impact on anglers and our industry that supports them.

Thank you again for your leadership.

Sincerely,

Scott Gudes
Vice President, Government Affairs

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