



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Shareholders' Alliance Supports Young Fishermen's Legislation

(Galveston, TX): Congressman Don Young (R-AK) and Congressman Seth Moulton (D-MA) have introduced groundbreaking legislation that would help promote the protection and long-term sustainability of our nation's commercial fishing businesses and seafood supply.

The Young Fishermen's Development Act of 2017 (H.R. 2079) would provide up to \$2 million in competitive grants through the NOAA Sea Grant Program to qualifying institutions and organizations to provide training and technical expertise for the next generation of commercial fishermen. Modeled after a widely successful Department of Agriculture program available to beginning ranchers and farmers, H.R. 2079 would educate young commercial fishermen with critical skills needed to run successful businesses and continue to supply the American public with a stable source of sustainable seafood.

*"The Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders' Alliance is an organization of fishermen that solve fishery problems. This Young Fishermen's Development Program is an example of one of those solutions. I want to know that when I retire, there are some smart, energetic and educated young men and women that have the skills and the drive to protect what my generation has helped build. We appreciate Congressmen Young and Moulton for their bi-coastal dedication to this important cause. I hope that our political leaders in the Gulf can come together and support this common-sense legislation."*

**Captain Bubba Cochrane**  
**Galveston, Texas**  
**President, Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders' Alliance**

*"We are the next generation of commercial fishermen and we're ready to show the older guys what we can do. Many of them are my role models and I'm honored to be part of an industry with such history and heritage. A 'Young Fishermen's Development Program' gives me the chance to take what exists today, make it even better, and be able to pass something even more successful onto my own son."*

**Captain Bobby Kelly**  
**Orange Beach, Alabama**

*“Being a commercial fisherman is about more than just catching fish - I need to be a captain, a business owner, a supervisor, an accountant, a mechanic, a paramedic, a marketer, a scientist, a manager, and a teacher. A program like the one introduced by Congressmen Young and Moulton is going to help young commercial fishermen like me build a better path for our future and the future of our fishery.”*

**Captain Shane Cantrell**  
**Galveston, Texas**

*“I'm one of the youngest commercial fishermen on the water in Crystal River, Florida. Right now, I'm working with some of the older fishermen to learn the skills of this trade. An educational grant program like this will help give me even more knowledge and a greater skill set that I can then use to be the most successful businessman I can be.”*

**Captain Aaron Mays**  
**Crystal River, Florida**

*“It's nice to see Congress working together on something that's going to help protect my commercial fishing business. This bill will help make sure that young fishermen like myself are best positioned to protect and grow our fisheries and to carry on our commercial fishing heritage. Thank you Congressman Young and Congressman Moulton.”*

**Captain Ed Pitre**  
**Galliano, Louisiana**

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The Shareholders' Alliance is the largest organization of commercial snapper and grouper fishermen in the Gulf of Mexico. We work hard to ensure that our fisheries are sustainably managed so our fishing businesses can thrive and our fishing communities can exist for future generations. We are the harvesters that provide much of the American public with a reliable source of domestically-caught wild Gulf seafood, and we do this through a philosophy that sustainable seafood and profitable fishing businesses depend on healthy fish populations.

**[www.shareholdersalliance.org](http://www.shareholdersalliance.org)**

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