FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
October 21, 2015

**Official Statement of the**  
**Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders’ Alliance**

In advance of his appearance at tomorrow’s House Natural Resources Committee hearing on H.R. 3094, the Gulf States Red Snapper Management Authority Act, Florida charter captain and noted opponent of commercial fishermen Bob Zales submitted testimony characterizing participants in the red snapper Individual Transferrable Quota (ITQ) program as “old time plantation owner(s) who allowed share croppers to farm the land.” Zales’ full testimony is attached, and a statement signed by a number of commercial fishermen is below:

We are offended by Mr. Zales’ attempt to smear hardworking fishermen with ugly labels from the past, but we cannot say we are surprised. Our well-regulated, sustainable, and accountable fishery should be envied by others because it is a model for managing fisheries responsibly, and an example of how much the Magnuson-Stevens Act has improved fishery management. This mischaracterization is an insult not only to the people who have invested wisely and patiently built businesses while helping the red snapper stock to rebound, but also to the many fishermen who make a good living under the ITQ system, and who, unlike sharecroppers, are able to grow their own businesses and purchase quota shares. The debate over Gulf red snapper is highly contentious, but there is absolutely no justification for slurs like this.

Bubba Cochrane, Galveston, Texas, F/V Chelsea Ann  
Scott Daggett, Largo, Florida, F/V Angelina  
Clyde and Joann Daughtry, Carrabelle, Florida, F/V Dealers Choice  
Paul Loughridge, Yankeetown, Florida, F/V Captain Josh  
Steve Maisel, Clearwater Beach, Florida, F/V Scorcher  
Matthew Tevlin, Indian Shores, Florida, F/V Offshore Account  
Jim Zurbrick, Steinhatchee, Florida, F/V Jolly Rogers II

####

For press inquiries please contact:  Eric Brazer, Deputy Director  
Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders’ Alliance  
919-451-1971 / eric@shareholdersalliance.org  
www.shareholdersalliance.org