



TREASURER OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

JOHN NEELY KENNEDY
TREASURER

August 5, 2016

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Honorable John Bel Edwards
Governor
State of Louisiana
P.O. Box 94004
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

RE: Red Snapper Stock

Dear Governor Edwards:

I write concerning your administration's decision to oppose state management of the Gulf of Mexico's red snapper stock. For several years, Louisiana has led the charge to transfer red snapper management authority from the federal government to the states. However, your decision to withhold support for this effort now undermines the significant work that has been done by the Coastal Conservation Association and the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, among many others, on this issue. Your decision also jeopardizes the tireless efforts of U.S. Rep. Garret Graves, who has led and continues to lead the legislative effort in the U.S. House of Representatives to make this transfer a reality. Secretary Melancon has cited a lack of funding as the primary cause for the administration's decision. However, this explanation makes no sense in light of last year's license and fee increases, and I am requesting a further explanation from the Secretary on this matter.

Last year, Louisiana fishermen supported an increase in the annual recreational saltwater fishing license fee that was intended, in part, to provide a financial foundation for the transfer of fisheries management to state control. As Treasurer, it is my responsibility to bring to light any expenditure from a statutory dedication fund—in this case the Saltwater Fish Research and Conservation Fund—that is not used in accordance with its original, understood purpose. Secretary Melancon's recent withdrawal of support for Louisiana control calls into question whether those proceeds will in fact be used in the way that Louisiana sportsmen expected when they supported the fee increase. I believe it is incumbent upon your administration to use those funds for their intended purpose or to refund Louisiana anglers the cost of the increase.

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Our recreational sportsmen need to have the full confidence that their fee proceeds will be spent in accordance with their intended purpose. Louisiana sportsmen have consistently stepped up to provide the funding needed for the better management of fish and game in this state. Now, they expect the state and LDWF to step up and keep their word to Louisiana recreational fisherman regarding state control of our red snapper stock. I expect and ask you to do the same.

Thank you, Governor, for your time and assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Kennedy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John Kennedy
State Treasurer

JNK/mlm/dtm

cc: Charlie Melancon
Secretary
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries