

May 21, 2018

The Honorable Ben Allen  
California State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 5072  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Allen:

As leading recreational fishing and boating organizations, we thank you for introducing legislation to phase out the use of large-mesh drift gillnets and bring California commercial swordfish fishing in-line with all other U.S. and international swordfish fisheries.

For many years, our community has supported efforts to transition away from drift gillnets to safer, more selective fishing methods for swordfish, tuna and other commercial species. Large-mesh drift gillnets are an anachronistic commercial fishing method that produce excessive bycatch and waste, including of popular sportfish, marine mammals and sea turtles. Over half of the catch in the California drift gillnet fishery is discarded as unwanted, prohibited, or protected species. It's time large-mesh drift gillnets are eliminated from California as they have been throughout the rest of the country.

In other U.S. and international fisheries, these gillnets have already been replaced by methods like deep-set buoy gear that are efficient for the targeted species and produce virtually no bycatch. By helping to transition the California drift gillnet fishery toward these more sustainable fishing methods, your legislation would represent a tremendous marine conservation victory that we have been working toward for many years.

Thank you for your leadership on this important legislation that will benefit the health and abundance of the marine resources we depend on.

Sincerely,

American Sportfishing Association  
Balboa Angling Club  
BoatUS  
California Sportfishing League  
Center for Sportfishing Policy  
Coastal Conservation Association California  
Coastside Fishing Club  
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation  
Dana Angling Club  
Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation  
International Game Fish Association  
Laguna Niguel Billfish Club

Marine Retailers Association of the Americas  
National Marine Manufacturers Association  
National Professional Anglers Association  
Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association  
Recreational Fishing Alliance  
Snook & Gamefish Foundation  
The Billfish Foundation  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation  
Partnership  
Tuna Club of Avalon  
Wild Oceans