

Say **NO** to the **AQUAA Act** (S. 3138/H.R. 6966)

Here are a few reasons why:

- **AQUAA brings industrial ocean fish farms to federal waters**, which can directly discharge untreated fish waste and other toxins into surrounding waters, attract and endanger marine life, spread lethal pests and disease, compromise healthy, wild fish stocks with catastrophic farmed fish spills, and jeopardize wild-caught fishing industries.
- Despite the direct impacts facilities will have on marine mammals and endangered species, AQUAA is **silent as to the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act**. This substantial oversight is simply unacceptable.
- AQUAA is **silent on pest and disease prevention and treatment**, including when and how farmed fish stocks must be tested, as well as methods of treatment and prevention of breakouts within the farm. Many treatments currently used on farmed fish kill nearby marine life and degrade water quality.
- AQUAA is **silent on traceability**. The public has a right to know about every stage of production, including where fish are sourced and processed, and what they are fed.
- AQUAA **will allow farming of genetically modified and transgenic fish**, which threaten the environment and public health. When GMO fish escape (which is inevitable), they will cause genetic degradation of our wild stocks. Eating farmed GMO fish is also a significant public health issue.
- **NOAA will receive excessive leeway in regulating** this new industry, including full discretion on administration of veterinary drugs (such as antibiotics and sea lice controls), ingredients in fish feed (such as overfished species and GMOs), and sourcing of farmed fish (like cultivating wild-caught juveniles). On these points, AQUAA is silent.
- The **rushed timelines for permitting** are insufficient to allow for full and adequate review. NOAA will have only 30 days to make a decision on complete permit applications, and applicants will have only 10 days to make necessary revisions to their applications.
- **Worker safety is ignored** Industrial ocean fish farms are one of the world's most dangerous jobs. AQUAA is silent on monitoring and regulating workplace conditions.
- AQUAA **relies on a failed strategy for decommissioning** facilities - the same method that has proven ineffective in the offshore drilling industry.

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🐟 AQUAA **limits public input**. Public comment periods are restricted to only once per facility application “to the extent practicable.” AQUAA is also silent on stakeholder engagement on the Aquaculture Subcommittee, which should include voices from conservation and marine protection NGOs and the wild-capture fishing industry.

🐟 AQUAA **does not fully protect states opposing the industry**. The “state opt out” provision requires facilities to comply with state laws banning or prohibiting certain types of aquaculture. This does not protect states that have effectively banned the industry through other mechanisms, such as refraining from regulating or permitting the industry at the agency level, or by defunding regulatory activities through the state’s budget.

🐟 AQUAA **does nothing to protect our wild-capture fishing industries**. There are no market-based protections for our wild-caught fisheries, which will be directly and significantly impacted by the increase in marine finfish aquaculture

🐟 AQUAA does not have any requirement or incentive that fish farmed in the U.S. stays in the country. The U.S. currently exports a significant amount of seafood, and the bill provides **no guarantee that it will reduce the seafood trade deficit**.

🐟 AQUAA pushes **outdated and unnecessary methods of fish farming**. In the decade of failed federal bills to legislate this industry, technology has progressed significantly. When combined with wild-capture fishing and ocean-based mariculture of shellfish and plants, land-based recirculating aquaculture systems can help increase seafood production without the environmental and socio-economic havoc.

Tell your members of Congress:
OPPOSE the AQUAA Act
(S. 3138/H.R. 6966)!

*For more information contact
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