

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE STATEMENT ON  
LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) discussed the current House and Senate Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) Reauthorization bills (HR 1355, Don Young, AK and S 1403, Marco Rubio, FL; respectively). Ms. Jennifer Gilden was available to answer questions. The Council has already commented on HR 1355, so the SSC limited its discussion to S 1403.

The Transparency clause in the S 1403 bill would require that all SSC meetings be recorded and made publicly available within 30 days of the meeting. The SSC is concerned that this may stifle scientific debate, affect how the meetings are run, and deter participation at these meetings which are already open to the public.

The Data Collection and Use clause in S 1403 will require stock assessments for all stocks under a fishery management plan (FMP). However, S 1403 does not define what constitutes a stock assessment. The SSC assumes the data-poor stock assessment methodologies currently in use (e.g., DCAC, DB-SRA) would satisfy this requirement. Additionally, the SSC assumes the survey-based assessment methodologies for CPS monitored stocks would satisfy this requirement. If both of these assumptions are true, then the PFMC is close to satisfying the requirement for having assessments for all stocks under an FMP. If the SSC's assumptions are incorrect, then it is unlikely with current resources and data availability that this requirement can be satisfied. The bill needs to give clear guidance as to what would qualify as a stock assessment.

PFMC  
06/14/15