

NPFMC Legislative Committee
DRAFT Terms of Reference and Standard Operating Procedures
October 2, 2024

Establishment and Statement of Purpose: The North Pacific Fishery Management Council shall establish and maintain a Legislative Committee to 1) review relevant Federal legislation, and 2) provide advice to the Executive Director and Council Chair on development of comments in preparation of potential response to written congressional requests (i.e., from a member of Congress or their staff) for technical or factual presentations (including comment letters and testimony at Congressional hearings) on legislation as it relates to the performance of the Council's functions under its grant. Given timing constraints, it is necessary for the Legislative Committee to meet prior to a formal request from Congress.

Comments must be specific and must be related to the Council's ability to fulfill the objectives and activities specified in its NOAA Grant, including the Council's ability to meet its conservation and management goals under the MSA or on technical aspects of the legislation. Councils are prohibited from making recommendations intended to provide support for or against specific legislation, including any direct or indirect attempts to influence the introduction, enactment, or modification of Federal and State legislation. Any comments from the Council will be submitted only in response to a documented request from a member of Congress or their staff for technical or factual feedback.

Membership: Committee members will be appointed by the Council Chair from members of the Council. Typically, this would include members of the Executive Committee and other Council members as deemed appropriate by the Council Chair. The Committee shall also seek advice from NOAA GC as needed.

Operations:

Chair: The Committee Chair will be the Council Chair, or their designee.

Rules of order: In general, rules of order will be informal. Committee advice will be reached by consensus, whenever possible. Committee reports will reflect the recommendations of the Committee.

Agenda: A draft agenda will be prepared in advance of each meeting by Council staff in consultation with the Committee Chair.

Meeting record and distribution: A report of each committee meeting will be prepared by the Executive Director or other Council staff as appropriate. The Committee Chair will maintain final approval of the committee report. The final report will be posted to a Council meeting agenda or made otherwise available on the Council website.

Public comment: Written public comment shall be allowed and can be submitted to the committee meeting agenda prior to the meeting, or through other means as necessary. Opportunity for oral public comment during the committee meeting may be provided at the discretion of the Committee Chair based on time available, availability of administrative support, and other factors. Public commenters should be alerted that the Council's role with respect to commenting on legislation is limited and that the purpose of public comment is not to invite discussion on the merits of legislation that goes beyond the scope of the factual and technical presentations that the Council may make.