



Resolution 26-6 Urging Fair and Equal U.S. Federal Treatment of Great Lakes Commercial Fishing

- WHEREAS,** the U.S. Great Lakes commercial fishing industry has a long history of providing wholesome, domestically harvested seafood, supporting coastal and rural communities, creating jobs, contributing to local and regional economies, and helping maintain a secure American food supply; and
- WHEREAS,** U.S. Great Lakes commercial fishing industry includes family businesses and other commercial enterprises that harvest, process, transport, and market food for American consumers while complying with extensive federal and state laws and fishery management requirements; and
- WHEREAS,** U.S. Great Lakes commercial fishing should receive treatment comparable to similarly situated American food and seafood producers when government agencies administer economic development, disaster, infrastructure, processing, marketing, research, workforce, and business assistance programs, as well as clear, accurate, and consistent information regarding eligibility; and
- WHEREAS,** currently, the fisheries, processors, and aquaculture operations in the Great Lakes are not provided with the same benefits and protections as ocean fisheries, including having access to certain U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) grants and certifications; and
- WHEREAS,** the Great Lakes Fishery Commission has found that Great Lakes commercial fisheries provided 3,000 jobs, and \$89 million per year in household income to the binational Great Lakes region, as well as the surrounding states, and would benefit from the resources and support that ocean commercial fishing receives¹; and
- WHEREAS,** the treaty rights of federally recognized Tribal Nations in the Great Lakes must be respected in fisheries policy; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED,** that the members of the GLLC recognize commercial fishing, fish processing, and aquaculture as vital parts of our economies, communities, and food supply and that these industries should have the support they need to continue to thrive; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that the members of the GLLC urge the United States Congress and appropriate agencies, including the USDA, to formally recognize Great Lakes commercial fishing as an important part of domestic food and seafood production; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that U.S. federal and state agencies should provide Great Lakes commercial fishermen and commercial fishing businesses with fair, equal, and consistent consideration in all programs for which they are lawfully eligible, together with clear and consistent guidance concerning eligibility, application requirements, deadlines, and available assistance; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Great Lakes commercial fishing be afforded fair access, where eligible, to grants, loans, disaster assistance, infrastructure programs, processing assistance, marketing programs, research funding, workforce programs, business-development programs, and other government resources available to similarly situated American food and seafood producers; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution be sent to the leaders of the Congressional Great Lakes Task Force, the United States Department of Agriculture Office of Seafood, and relevant state departments and agencies for their consideration and action.

Approved at the 2026 Annual Meeting on September 29, 2026

¹ Great Lakes Fishery Commission. [*The Great Lakes Valuation Report*](#), 2025