



**Congressional Legislation Report**  
**April 25, 2012**

On April 24, 2012, the Senate Appropriations committee adopted S.2323. They included language from S.2184, Kerry-Snowe Fisheries Investment and Regulatory Relief Act of 2012. S.2184 restored funding from the Department of Commerce's Saltonstall-Kennedy fund back to fishermen and communities for whom it was originally intended. Senator Kerry asked Chair Mikulski to include his language in the FY2013 bill to redirect \$119,064,000 in S-K funds to assist fishermen.

Fisheries Investment and Regulatory Relief Act of 2012 - Amends the Saltonstall-Kennedy Act to revise the program under which the Secretary of Commerce provides financial assistance for fisheries research and development projects. Directs each Regional Fishery Management Council to establish a fishery investment committee to: (1) develop a regional fishery investment plan identifying research, conservation, management needs, and actions to rebuild and maintain healthy fish populations and sustainable fisheries; and (2) make recommendations to the Council on grant applications and projects to implement the respective plans. It requires that such plans be revised, approved by the relevant Council, and submitted to the Secretary at least once every five years. The legislation directs the Secretary to establish an annual competitive grant program to advance regional priorities included in such plans. State, federal, regional, or private entities or persons are eligible for such funding and directs that preference be given to public-private partnerships. Specifies that national fisheries investment program funds be used by the Secretary for research and investment that supports rebuilding and maintaining healthy U.S. fish populations and promotes sustainable fisheries. (Currently, such funds are used for harvesting, processing, marketing, and other associated infrastructures.) It allocates funds to each Council and marine fisheries commissions. Limits to a specified percentage the funds authorized to offset receipts for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) operations, research, and facilities.