



News from Albano & Milam 1st Legislative District



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ALBANO/MILAM BILL TO ENSURE FREE RECREATIONAL SALTWATER FISHING IN NEW JERSEY ADVANCES

(TRENTON) – Legislation Assemblymen Nelson Albano and Matt Milam sponsored to ensure free recreational saltwater fishing continues in New Jersey was released today by an Assembly committee.

The bill (A-3252) answers a federal law that authorized the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to collect a fee beginning in 2011 to cover costs associated with a new saltwater angler registry.

“The idea that fisherman should have to pay to use the open ocean is absurd,” Milam said. “This has always been free in New Jersey and should remain that way forever.”

In 2007 Congress reauthorized a fish conservation and management act that directed a National Saltwater Angler Registry be established by Jan. 1, 2009.

The registry is meant to identify all saltwater anglers to obtain more accurate information to improve fisheries management.

Anglers will be exempt from the federal registry if a state has its own registration or system, but New Jersey has neither, so state anglers would be required to register with the federal government if there's no program in place by year's end.

The bill sponsored by Albano and Milam (both D Atlantic/Cape May/Cumberland) would direct the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to establish a registry program for saltwater recreational anglers to comply with federal law, but specify the state cannot charge a registration fee.

(MORE)

“New Jersey is expensive enough without charging people looking for fun and relaxation to fish the open sea,” Albano said. “Fish conservation and management is a smart thing, but we don’t need to be charging saltwater anglers to make it reality.”

The bill was released 5-0 by the Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. It now heads to the Assembly Speaker, who decides if and when to post it for a floor vote.

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