

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 225

BY REPRESENTATIVES LEOPOLD, CONNICK, GAROFALO, GISCLAIR,
HARRISON, AND ST. GERMAIN

CONGRESS: Memorializes Congress and the Louisiana congressional delegation to work to adopt policies that will help with the stability and the viability of the domestic shrimp industry

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to work to
3 adopt policies that will help with the stability and the viability of the domestic
4 shrimp industry, including support for the Imported Seafood Safety Standards Act.

5 WHEREAS, consumption of seafood is one of the fastest growing areas of our
6 nation's food supply with shrimp being one of the most consumed seafood products in the
7 United States; and

8 WHEREAS, over three-fourths of the seafood consumed in the United States is
9 imported from other countries around the world with shrimp as the leading fresh or frozen
10 product imported into the United States accounting for about twenty-eight percent of all
11 seafood imports by weight; and

12 WHEREAS, most of the shrimp consumed in the United States is grown in
13 man-made ponds along the coasts of Thailand, Vietnam, Ecuador, and other tropical
14 countries rather than being harvested from the waters of the Gulf of Mexico; and

15 WHEREAS, the countries that produce most of the shrimp consumed worldwide
16 support their shrimp hatcheries with large state subsidies to keep the price of their shrimp
17 lower than the prices that our domestic Gulf of Mexico shrimpers need to charge in order
18 to just break even; and

1 WHEREAS, the Tariff Act of 1930, a law originally introduced to protect farmers
2 from imports, allows United States industries to “petition the government for relief from
3 imports that benefit from subsidies provided through foreign government programs”; and

4 WHEREAS, the United States Department of Commerce launched an investigation
5 in 2013 to determine whether there was sufficient evidence to support the claim that the
6 seven largest shrimp-producing countries were subsidizing their shrimp industries, an
7 investigation that will run concurrently with the International Trade Commission's (ITC)
8 examination of whether the subsidies are causing significant injury to United States
9 producers with both investigations needing to call for countervailing duties before any
10 penalties could be applied; and

11 WHEREAS, in September 2013, the ITC voted to throw out the shrimp
12 countervailing duty case based on the fact that injury to the domestic industry was not
13 proven, thus removing the possibility of a countervailing duty and terminating the shrimp
14 subsidy investigation against Ecuador, China, India, Malaysia, and Vietnam; and

15 WHEREAS, the ITC's decision has had a devastating impact on the domestic shrimp
16 industry, including the shrimpers trawling the Gulf of Mexico and landing their shrimp at
17 Louisiana docks; and

18 WHEREAS, without relief from the unfair foreign competition undercutting the
19 domestic shrimp prices, the prices that shrimpers are getting at the dock have dropped over
20 fifty percent from last year making it almost impossible for shrimpers to earn enough money
21 to provide for their families; and

22 WHEREAS, the Imported Seafood Safety Standards Act introduced in the United
23 States Senate by Louisiana Senator David Vitter is being supported by the American Shrimp
24 Processors Association and it specifically targets foreign food imported into the United
25 States with hopes of tightening testing standards, increasing inspection standards on foreign
26 imported seafood, requiring placement of United States safety standards for foreign
27 exporters, and increasing severe penalties for exporters who fail food safety inspections,
28 ultimately benefitting the American shrimp industry.

29 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
30 memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to work to

1 adopt policies that will help with the stability and the viability of the domestic shrimp
2 industry including support for the Imported Seafood Safety Standards Act.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
4 presiding officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the
5 United States of America and to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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Leopold

Memorializes the U.S. Congress to take such actions as are necessary to work to adopt policies that will help with the stability and the viability of the domestic shrimp industry including support for the Imported Seafood Safety Standards Act.