



November 18, 2011

Mr. Jim Kellogg, President  
California Fish and Game Commission  
P.O. Box 94244-2090  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

**RE: Proposed Fish Stocking Regulations**

Dear Mr. Kellogg:

On behalf of the California Restaurant Association (CRA) and the California Grocers Association (CGA), we write to express our opposition to the fish stocking regulations to be heard at the December 15, 2011 Commission meeting.

The California Restaurant Association is the oldest restaurant association in America with more than 100 years of experience and we constantly strive to simultaneously improve the restaurant business and to breed the next generation of food service leaders, ensuring the future of this vital industry. The California restaurant industry is one of the largest private-sector employers in the state with more than 1.4 million food industry jobs. The industry had an estimated \$56.7 billion in food and drink sales in 2009 and the generation of \$4.5 billion in California sales tax per year. Restaurants are indisputably a driving force in both the state employment and revenue sectors. More than 1.4 million food industry jobs are currently in existence and it is expected that there will be 1.6 million jobs in this field by 2020.

The California Grocers Association is a nonprofit, statewide trade association representing the retail food industry since 1898. CGA membership includes over 500 retailers operating more than 6,000 food stores in California and Nevada and over 300 grocery supplier companies including chain and independent supermarkets, convenience stores, and mass merchandisers. CGA supermarkets alone sustain more than 300,000 jobs and play a vital role in California's economy.

We believe the proposed fish stocking regulations are overly stringent and will put aqua culturists or fish farmers in a position where they are unable to comply. These costly regulations are likely to cause some fish farmers and recreational property owners to be driven to the edge, forcing closure and increased consumer costs. The proposed regulations will only drive up the cost of California fish, making it difficult for businesses to pass on these added costs to price conscious consumers. Additionally, if lake operators are forced to close it will hurt destination (outdoor) resorts and communities dependent on tourism and recreational fishing — and hurt local small business owners.

California restaurants and grocery stores are dependent on an affordable supply of fish and California has some of the highest health standards. If California hatcheries and fish farmers are put out of business, it will drive up consumer prices and cause some to purchase fish from other states and countries that don't share California's highest health and environmental standards. According to the California Department of Agriculture, 35% of California's food source will come from aquaculture in the future. California needs to protect a major food source found at restaurants and grocery stores throughout the state, California grown fish.

For these and other reasons, the California Restaurant Association and the California Grocers Association request that the Fish and Game Commission reject the proposed stocking regulations.

Sincerely,



Matt Sutton  
Senior Legislative Director  
California Restaurant Association



Kara Bush  
Manager, Government Relations  
California Grocers Association