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A BILL TO STRENGTHEN ENFORCEMENT MECHANISMS TO STOP IUU FISHING

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, today I reintroduce legislation to strengthen enforcement mechanisms to stop illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, which threatens the economic and social infrastructure of fishing communities and industry. Moreover, IUU fishing is a matter of national security for the United States and our allies across the globe, especially in the Asia-Pacific region.

The United States has become a world leader in sustainable management of marine

fisheries, in great part due to the Magnuson-Stevens Act. In other parts of the world, however, poor fisheries management is more common, and stocks are overharvested—the direct result of IUU fishing.

IUU fishing is not only a matter of economic security and food sustainability. It is also a matter of national and regional security for the U.S. and our allies. IUU fishing is closely associated with various trafficking activities that are highly likely to operate from the same foreign vessels that engage in IUU fishing activities. IUU fishing has become a significant issue that has caused conflicts between countries and threatens regional stability such as that in the Asia-Pacific region.

Countries like Australia, Palau and now even Papua New Guinea have led the way in combating IUU fishing, and we must take immediate and forceful action as well. The bipartisan bill I am introducing today, the Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing Enforcement Act of 2015, along with my colleague

from Alaska, Mr. YOUNG, would provide the Coast Guard and NOAA with much-needed tools to fight illegal fishing. It would also implement the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate IUU fishing, a treaty ratified by the Senate last year that would set international standards for denying port entry and services to vessels that have engaged in illegal fishing.

This bill is the product of extensive negotiations between Democratic and Republican staff in the last Congress, and is supported by a broad coalition that includes the U.S. State Department, fishing industry interests, and conservation groups. The bill I introduce today is identical to language that passed the House Committee on Natural Resources by unanimous consent on September 18, 2014. I thank Mr. YOUNG and his staff for working with us on this legislation, and I look forward to bill becoming law and enhancing our ability to address the harmful effects of IUU fishing.