

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2023 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 465

(Delegates Otto and Jacobs)

Environment and Transportation

Education, Energy, and the Environment

Natural Resources - Recreational Crabbing Gear - Individuals Under the Age of
16 Years

This bill authorizes an individual younger than age 16 – who is catching or attempting to catch crabs in the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries without a recreational crabbing license – to use a collapsible trap, net ring, handline, or dip net, as described by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in regulations. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2023.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not materially affect State finances. Any decrease in license fee revenue is expected to be negligible.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law:

Department of Natural Resources' Regulatory Authority

DNR is authorized to adopt rules and regulations to, among other things, (1) restrict catching and possessing any blue crab and (2) establish the methods by which blue crabs are taken. DNR also has authority to adopt regulations to establish conservation and

management measures associated with its responsibility/authority to adopt fishery management plans for various species, including blue crabs.

Department of Natural Resources Regulations

DNR regulations require an individual who catches or attempts to catch blue crabs for recreational purposes in the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries to pay a fee and obtain a recreational crabbing license in order to use the following gear to catch blue crabs: a trotline, collapsible traps or net rings, seines, and up to 10 eel pots for catching the individual's own bait. The annual fee for a recreational crabbing license is \$5 for a Maryland resident; however, if the Maryland resident has a Chesapeake Bay and coastal sport fishing license or a resident consolidated senior sport fishing license, the annual fee is \$2. The fee for a nonresident is \$10. A recreational crabbing boat license is also available, for an annual fee of \$15, which authorizes individuals in the licensed boat to catch or attempt to catch blue crabs in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries using a trotline or collapsible traps or net rings.

An individual is not required to have a recreational crabbing license if the individual uses any of the following gear: a dipnet, a handline, or up to two registered crab pots if the person using the crab pots is an owner, lessee, or tenant of a private property along the shore, or a guest of an owner, lessee, or tenant of a private property along the shore. An individual assisting an individual who has a recreational crabbing license or an individual crabbing for recreational purposes from a boat licensed as a recreational crabbing boat is also not required to have a recreational crabbing license. An unlicensed individual, however, is subject to more restrictive daily catch and possession limits than a licensed individual.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: SB 102 (Senator Bailey) - Education, Energy, and the Environment.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 8, 2023
km/lgc Third Reader - March 20, 2023
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