

HOUSE BILL 1314

M2

7lr3169
CF 7lr3301

By: **Delegates Jacobs, Arentz, Mautz, and Otto**

Introduced and read first time: February 10, 2017

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Crabs – Holiday Harvest Times – Trotlines and Crab Pots**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the Department of Natural Resources to adopt regulations
4 that allow a tidal fish licensee authorized to catch crabs using trotlines or crab pots
5 to work certain hours during certain time periods; and generally relating to harvest
6 times for crabs using trotlines and crab pots.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
8 Article – Natural Resources
9 Section 4–803
10 Annotated Code of Maryland
11 (2012 Replacement Volume and 2016 Supplement)

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
13 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

14 **Article – Natural Resources**

15 4–803.

16 (a) The Department may adopt rules and regulations to effectuate the following
17 purposes:

- 18 (1) To restrict catching and possessing any blue crab;
- 19 (2) The methods by which crabs are taken;
- 20 (3) To close or open any specified area to catch crabs;
- 21 (4) To prohibit or restrict devices used to catch crabs;

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (5) To establish seasons to catch crabs;

2 (6) To establish that the workday for tidal fish licensees who catch crabs
3 using trotline gear may begin earlier than 1 hour before sunrise; and

4 (7) To establish minimum size limits for hard, soft, and peeler crabs.
5 However, this section does not permit the Department to change existing license fees for
6 catching, picking, canning, packing, or shipping cooked hard or soft crabs or crab meat; or
7 for selling, or shipping live hard or soft crabs by barrel or crate. The Department may set
8 license fees on types of gear or equipment if not otherwise set by law.

9 (b) (1) The Department may not adopt regulations to:

10 (i) Restrict a tidal fish licensee who catches crabs using trotline gear
11 to a workday of less than 8 hours per day, excluding time spent setting or taking up gear;
12 or

13 (ii) Establish time restrictions on a tidal fish licensee using trotline
14 gear for setting and taking up gear.

15 (2) If the Department authorizes the workday to begin earlier than 1 hour
16 before sunrise, then:

17 (i) **[The] SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION, THE**
18 **Department may not adopt regulations to restrict a tidal fish licensee who catches crabs**
19 **using trotline gear to a workday of less than 11 hours per day, including time spent setting**
20 **or taking up gear; and**

21 (ii) Trotline gear may not be set earlier than the catch time
22 established by the Department.

23 **(C) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS THAT ALLOW A**
24 **LICENSEE WHO IS AUTHORIZED TO CATCH CRABS USING TROTLINE GEAR, CRAB POTS**
25 **TO WORK THE FOLLOWING HOURS ON MEMORIAL DAY, INDEPENDENCE DAY,**
26 **LABOR DAY, AND THE WEEKEND EITHER BEFORE OR AFTER EACH OF THESE**
27 **HOLIDAYS IN A LICENSE YEAR:**

28 **(1) FOR A LICENSEE WHO USES TROTLINE GEAR, HOURS THAT BEGIN**
29 **2 HOURS BEFORE SUNRISE AND END 8 HOURS AFTER SUNRISE, NOT INCLUDING TIME**
30 **SPENT SETTING OR TAKING UP GEAR; OR**

31 **(2) FOR A LICENSEE WHO USES CRAB POTS, HOURS THAT BEGIN 1.5**
32 **HOURS BEFORE SUNRISE AND END 6.5 HOURS AFTER SUNRISE.**

33 **[(c)] (D)** The Department's regulations may not become effective under this
34 section until the Department first holds public hearings. The Department shall advertise

1 the time, place, and purpose of the hearings in one newspaper of general daily circulation
2 in the State, and at least in one newspaper circulated in the affected region of each county
3 whose waters may be directly affected by the proposed regulations at least once per week
4 for 2 successive weeks in advance of the hearings.

5 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June
6 1, 2017.