

SB0507_DNR_SUP_EEE_2-13-24.pdf

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Position: FAV



Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Josh Kurtz, Secretary
David Goshorn, Deputy Secretary

February 13, 2024

BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 507 – First Reader

SHORT TITLE: Special Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License - Nonresidents - License Fee

DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: SUPPORT

EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION

The Department supports the raising of recreational fishing fees. It has been at least fourteen years since any recreational fishing fees were raised. While the agency supports raising certain fees to keep up with inflation and costs associated with managing the resources used by recreational fishing licensees, it does want to make sure the fees are raised in a way that is purposeful and we believe that this legislation does just that.

The boat decal is a popular product. In 2023, the agency sold 47,543 (10,194 nonresident) boat decal licenses. This product is popular with individuals who own boats because the decal covers the recreational fishing license costs for anyone on the vessel.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Currently, this fee is \$50 for both residents and nonresidents. It allows an individual to purchase the license which includes a decal that is placed on the vessel. Individuals fishing on the vessel are required to register for free when fishing but are not charged for additional licenses.

The last increase to recreational fishing licenses was in HB 1345 (2010). Many fees were not raised at that time, including the \$50 boat decal. The \$50 fee went into place after the passage of SB 1012 (2007), which increased it from \$40 to \$50.

BILL EXPLANATION

The bill would increase the fee for the Chesapeake and Coastal Sportfishing Boat Decal from \$50 to \$100 for a nonresident.

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SenatorBailey_FAV_SB507.pdf

Uploaded by: Jack Bailey

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Calvert and St. Mary's Counties

Budget & Taxation Committee



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February 13, 2024

Senate Bill 507 – Special Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License - Nonresidents - License Fee

Dear Chairman Feldman and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to introduce Senate Bill 507. This legislation would create a nonresident license fee for a Special Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License.

This license is one of the very few where residents and nonresidents pay the same fee. Currently, all applicants for a Special Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License pay a license fee of \$50. This legislation would increase this fee for nonresidents to \$100. This special license authorizes any person on a boat that has the license to fish for finfish in the Chesapeake Bay or in its tributaries up to the tidal boundaries, or in the State's waters of the Atlantic Ocean and the Atlantic coastal bays and their tributaries. The owner of the boat is also issued a complimentary Chesapeake Bay and coastal sport fishing license.

It is important to note that this legislation will have no fiscal impact on Marylanders. This Committee is aware of the importance of financing the conservation and management of our State's natural resources. This is particularly true when we consider that the Federal government gives Maryland \$3 for every \$1 the State raises in license revenue. According to data from the Department of Natural Resources, in 2023, 9,760 of the 42,830 special licenses sold were purchased by nonresidents. I believe that, by making this license consistent with other licenses in having different fees for residents and nonresidents, we can support our natural resources without imposing any additional burdens on Marylanders.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 507. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Bailey'.

Senator Jack Bailey