



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

February 14, 2024

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 438 – First Reader

SHORT TITLE: Fishing Licenses and Stamps - Fee Exemptions - Residents Eligible for Assistance Programs

DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION

The agency supports the intent of this bill as subsistence fishing is important and understands the financial hardships of citizens participating in these programs. The Department would suggest amendments necessary to clarify the intent and lessen the fiscal and operational impact.

Specifically, the Department would suggest amendments including changing “eligible” to “enrolled” for those who can receive this exemption – and also potentially removing medicaid recipients from those eligible to lessen the fiscal impact on the Agency.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

No similar bills have been proposed previously. The agency does issue complimentary licenses to former prisoners of war, 100% service connected disabled American veterans, certain government individuals such as the President of the United States and state governors. Additionally, the state has 25 free fishing areas located throughout the state where fishing licenses are not required. Individuals may fish for free from a boat with a boat license. Individuals may fish for free from their property abutting water. And individuals may fish for free the first two Saturdays in June and July 4th.

BILL EXPLANATION

The bill would make recreational fishing licenses free to residents who are recipients of Medicaid, SNAP, WIC, or TANF programs.

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BY:

(To be offered in the Environment and Transportation Committee)

AMENDMENT TO HOUSE BILL 438

(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 2, strike “**Eligible for**” and substitute “**Enrolled in**”; and in line 4, strike “eligible for” and substitute “enrolled in”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 2, in line 14, on page 3, in line 22, and on page 4, in line 12, in each instance, strike “**ELIGIBLE FOR**” and substitute “**ENROLLED IN**”; on page 2, in line 16, on page 3, in line 24, and on page 4, in line 14, in each instance, after the first “**PROGRAM,**” insert “**OR**”; on page 2, in line 17, on page 3, in line 25, and on page 4, in line 15, in each instance, strike the comma; and in the same lines, in each instance, strike “**OR MEDICAID**”.