

By: Senator Colburn

Requested: November 15, 1995

Introduced and read first time: January 10, 1996

Assigned to: Economic and Environmental Affairs

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 Department of Natural Resources - Crab Seasons - Regulatory Authority

3 FOR the purpose of prohibiting the Department of Natural Resources from adopting
4 certain regulations establishing seasons for the catching of crabs.

5 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
6 Article - Natural Resources
7 Section 4-803
8 Annotated Code of Maryland
9 (1989 Replacement Volume and 1995 Supplement)

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

12 Article - Natural Resources

13 4-803.

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

16 (1) To restrict catching and possessing any blue crab;

17 (2) The methods by which crabs are taken;

18 (3) To close or open any specified area to catch crabs;

19 (4) To prohibit or restrict devices used to catch crabs;

20 [(5) To establish seasons to catch crabs;] and

21 [(6)] (5) To establish minimum size limits for hard, soft, and peeler crabs.

22 However, this section does not permit the Department to change existing license fees for
23 catching, picking, canning, packing, or shipping cooked hard or soft crabs or crab meat; or
24 for selling, or shipping live hard or soft crabs by barrel or crate. The Department may set
25 license fees on types of gear or equipment if not otherwise set by law.

26 (b) The Department's regulations may not become effective under this section
27 until the Department first holds public hearings. The Department shall advertise the

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1 time, place, and purpose of the hearings in one newspaper of general daily circulation in
2 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 for 2 successive weeks
4 in advance of the hearings.

5 (C) THE DEPARTMENT MAY NOT ADOPT REGULATIONS TO ESTABLISH
6 SEASONS TO CATCH CRABS.

7 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
8 October 1, 1996.