

Department of Fiscal Services  
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 505 (Senator Dyson)  
Economic and Environmental Affairs

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**Fish - Limited Entry to Commercial Fishing - Prohibition of Waiting Lists**

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This bill requires the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to issue a commercial fishing license upon receiving a complete application and all relevant fees. It eliminates the limited entry provision and the current moratorium and delay in issuing commercial licenses as well as the specific moratorium on commercial licenses for striped bass. Further, it eliminates the permanent transfer of a commercial license to another person; a temporary transfer may be allowed for a period of 10 days if a person cannot fish due to illness.

The bill applies retroactively to any person on any waiting list before the bill's October 1, 1996 effective date and requires DNR to issue a license to each eligible applicant for the fishing season for which the applicant applied for a license that begins after that date.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Indeterminate increase in special fund revenues, with a commensurate increase in special fund expenditures.

**Local Effect:** None.

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**Fiscal Analysis**

**State Effect:** There are currently 705 individuals on the Limited Entry waiting lists. Of these, 349 applied for a \$50 license; 64 applied for a \$300 license; 52 applied for a \$150 license; and the remaining 240 applied for a \$100 license. These individuals have already paid these fees for a total of \$68,554, though they may withdraw from the waiting list at any time and receive a refund of all fees paid. Under this legislation the process of receiving a commercial fishing license would be drastically shortened. As a result, the number of persons applying for such a license could potentially increase. However, it cannot be

estimated at this time by how much license applications and fee revenues would increase.

In addition, many license applicants, including those who are already on the waiting list and have paid the basic fees, would choose to enter fisheries for which there is a surcharge. These surcharges range from \$10 to \$300 each. The striped bass surcharge is either \$100 or \$200, depending upon the type of basic commercial license that the individual possesses. Revenues due to individuals applying for these different fishery activities and paying the surcharges would increase by an indeterminate amount.

It is assumed that DNR expenditures for administration and fisheries management would increase commensurate with any revenue increases.

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**Information Source(s):** Department of Natural Resources, Department of Fiscal Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 23, 1996

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