

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 255 (Delegate Schisler)

Environmental Matters

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**Tidal Fish License - Apprenticeship Permits**

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This bill repeals the December 31, 2000 sunset date applicable to the apprenticeship program for tidal fish licenses that allows persons to acquire practical experience while on the apprenticeship waiting list.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. The bill would not materially alter the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) operations or finances.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal.

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**Fiscal Analysis**

**Background:** Chapters 418 and 419 of 1998 (Senate Bill 679 and House Bill 1260) were the product of a workgroup convened by the Department of Natural Resources to develop a viable program that would maintain a control on fishing efforts and at the same time incorporate an avenue for new participants in the fishery. The new limited entry law made 3 major changes to the management of Maryland fisheries. First, the law altered the current process for issuing tidal fish licenses by providing that the individuals on the primary waiting list as of December 31, 1997 would receive a license. Second, an apprenticeship program was established to provide a mechanism for individuals to enter the commercial fishery after acquiring practical experience relating to commercial fishing activities. Finally, the law provided for the licensing and regulation of noncommercial crabbing. The law established recreational crabbing license fees for residents and nonresidents and required all fees

collected to be deposited in the Fisheries Research and Development Fund for research related to the noncommercial crab catch.

The new limited entry law has been in effect since June 1, 1998. As required by the law, the approximately 650 candidates on the primary waiting list as of December 1, 1997 have been offered tidal fish licenses, bringing the total number of licensees to 6,936. In addition, 186 individuals on the secondary waiting list have entered the apprenticeship program established by the new law. As of November 1998, there were 420 individuals on the waiting list to enter the apprenticeship program.

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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 11, 1999

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