

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2006 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Revised**

House Bill 94

(Delegate Elmore and Queen Anne's County Delegation)

Environmental Matters

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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**Queen Anne's and Somerset Counties - Authorization to Harvest Seafood and Engage in the Seafood Industry**

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This bill authorizes the governing body of Queen Anne's County or Somerset County to adopt an ordinance, resolution, or regulation or take any other action the governing body considers necessary to authorize a person to engage in specified activities related to the seafood industry and to harvest seafood. Before taking such action, the governing body must hold a public hearing and obtain the written consent of the Secretary of Natural Resources.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The bill is not anticipated to have a significant impact on State operations or finances.

**Local Effect:** Queen Anne's County and Somerset County both report that the bill will not significantly affect local finances.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential meaningful.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** Chapter 134 of 2004 authorizes the Dorchester County Council to adopt an ordinance, resolution, or regulation or take any other action that the council considers necessary to authorize a person to engage in specified activities related to the seafood industry and to harvest seafood. Specific statutory authority pertaining to Queen Anne's County and Somerset County does not exist.

**Background:** According to the Maryland Department of Agriculture, there are 74 seafood processing plants employing 1,391 people and over 6,600 watermen who work the Chesapeake Bay. In 2003, 49.3 million pounds of seafood were landed at a dockside value of over \$49 million.

**Small Business Effect:** Somerset County is a major seafood processor; two of the county's largest employers are in the seafood industry. Seafood is also important to the economy of Queen's Anne County. To the extent this bill strengthens the seafood industry in these counties, small businesses would be positively impacted.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Queen Anne's County, Somerset County, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Maryland Department of Agriculture, Maryland Department of the Environment, Department of Business and Economic Development, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 27, 2006  
nas/hlb Revised - House Third Reader - March 27, 2006

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