

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2009 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 994 (Senator Klausmeier)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Crabbing - Crab Pots - Requirements

This bill requires that a crab pot set by a person to catch crabs be marked with a buoy that is easily visible on the surface of the water and constructed of durable material. Crab pot buoys may not be constructed of a glass or plastic bottle, jug, or metal can. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is required to adopt implementing regulations.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not materially impact State operations or finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: In Worcester County, an owner of tidewater shoreline property may not set more than four crab pots attached to a buoy or float set not more than 200 feet from shore. This buoy or float must be colored or painted orange and conspicuously marked by a sign at least six inches by six inches indicating the owner's name and address.

DNR regulations addressing crab pots include the following requirements:

- each pot individually set must be marked with a buoy that is easily visible on the surface;

- each string of pots must be marked at each end with a buoy that is easily visible on the surface; and
- each buoy must be clearly marked with the identification number of the licensee in letters at least two inches high, and, if the buoy is attached to a string of crab pots, with the number of pots in the string.

Regulations also authorize DNR to require individual numbered markers to be attached to every crab pot buoy.

Background: Recreational crabbers use glass or plastic bottles, jugs, or metal cans for crab pot buoys. These types of buoys can be difficult to see and may pose a hazard to safe navigation of vessels.

Small Business Effect: DNR is not aware of any commercial crabbing businesses that use glass or plastic bottles, jugs, or metal cans as crab pot buoys. Nevertheless, to the extent small businesses must purchase new buoys to meet the bill's requirements, expenditures increase.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

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mcp/ljm

Analysis by: Amanda Mock

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510