

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2011 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 1240

(Delegate Jacobs, *et al.*)

Environmental Matters

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Counties - Natural Resources - Authorization to Harvest Seafood and Engage in
the Seafood Industry

This bill expands an authorization to *all counties* to adopt an ordinance, resolution, or regulation or take any other action considered necessary to authorize a person to engage in specified activities related to the seafood industry and to harvest seafood. Before adopting such an ordinance, resolution, or regulation, the governing body must hold a public hearing and obtain the written consent of the Secretary of Natural Resources.

Fiscal Summary

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

Local Effect: The bill does not materially affect local operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful.

Analysis

Current Law: The governing bodies of Calvert, Dorchester, Queen Anne's, and Somerset counties are authorized to adopt an ordinance, resolution, or regulation or take any other action that the governing bodies consider necessary to authorize a person to engage in specified activities related to the seafood industry and to harvest seafood. Before taking such action, the county commissioners must hold a public hearing and obtain the written consent of the Secretary of Natural Resources. In the event of a conflict, State or federal law or written program guidance preempts any action taken by the county's governing body.

Background: According to the Maryland Department of Agriculture, the total estimated value of the Maryland seafood industry is approximately \$700 million. Over 6,000 watermen work the Chesapeake Bay, and 70 seafood processing plants in the State employ 1,217 people. In 2009, 55.8 million pounds of seafood were landed at a dockside value of over \$67.3 million.

Small Business Effect: To the extent the bill strengthens the seafood industry in the counties that do not currently have this authority, small businesses are positively impacted.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Baltimore, Garrett, and Montgomery counties; Department of Natural Resources; Maryland Department of Agriculture; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 16, 2011
ncs/lgc Revised - House Third Reader - March 29, 2011

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