

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 1249

(Delegate Adams)

Environment and Transportation

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Crab Harvest – Start Time – Days in July

This bill requires the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to adopt regulations that allow tidal fish licensees authorized to catch crabs using all legal gear to work one additional early hour on any day in July as determined by the department (in addition to July 3 and 4, for which such a requirement already applies). **The bill takes effect June 1, 2018.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill can be implemented by DNR with existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: DNR may adopt rules and regulations for specified purposes relating to crab harvesting, including to restrict catching and possessing any blue crab and to establish seasons to catch crabs. Chapters 400 and 401 of 2017 require DNR to adopt regulations that authorize a tidal fish licensee who is authorized to catch crabs using all legal gear to work one additional early hour on Labor Day, Memorial Day, July 4, and the day before each of those holidays in a license year.

DNR regulations establish time periods when an individual licensed to catch crabs for sale may remove crabs from commercial gear in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries, by gear type. For trotlines, the periods are (1) between 1 hour before sunrise to 9 hours

after sunrise during the period from May through September, with the exception of Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, and the day immediately preceding each of those holidays, when the time period is between 2 hours before sunrise to 9 hours after sunrise and (2) between sunrise and 10 hours after sunrise during April, October, November, and December. The same time periods apply for crab scrapes, although crab scrapes may not be used from October 31 to April 14. For crab pots, bank traps, channel pounds, collapsible traps, net rings, handlines, dip nets, and pound nets, generally, the time period is between 0.5 hours before sunrise to 7.5 hours after sunrise, with the exception of Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, and the day immediately preceding each of those holidays, when the time period is between 1.5 hours before sunrise to 7.5 hours after sunrise.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources; Maryland Watermen's Association; Department of Legislative Services

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