

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Joint Resolution 4 (Senator Bailey, *et al.*)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Recognition of Maryland License Suspensions and Revocations by the Potomac River Fisheries Commission

This joint resolution requests that the Potomac River Fisheries Commission take action, consistent with the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact, to prohibit a person from participating in a fishery under the commission's jurisdiction if the person's license to catch, sell, buy, process, transport, export, or otherwise deal in fish in Maryland has been suspended or revoked.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill does not directly affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: The Potomac River Fisheries Commission, comprised of representatives of Maryland and Virginia, was established by the Potomac River Compact of 1958 and regulates fisheries (including recreational and commercial licensing) in the mainstem tidal Potomac River, from Washington, DC to the Chesapeake Bay. The commission's regulations are jointly enforced by the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Natural Resources Police and the Virginia Marine Resources Commission Marine Police.

The concept of the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact originated in the 1980s when law enforcement agencies were looking for a way to deal with individuals who violated wildlife and resource laws in multiple states and failed to answer to charges outside of their home state. Under the compact, there is reciprocal recognition among the member states (45 states) of hunting and recreational fishing license privilege suspensions. DNR indicated in 2019 that Maryland had entered 743 violators under the compact over the previous four years, preventing those violators from obtaining hunting and recreational fishing licenses in each of the participating states.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources; Potomac River Fisheries Commission; Department of Legislative Services

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mr/lgc

Analysis by: Scott D. Kennedy

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