

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2021 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 579

(Delegate Hornberger)

Environment and Transportation

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Cecil County - Snare Traps - Repeal of Prohibitions

This bill removes Cecil County from the existing county-specific prohibition against the use, sale, possession, setting, placement, or maintenance of a snare trap. As a result, existing criminal penalties for violations of that provision no longer apply to those acts in Cecil County. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2021.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect State finances or operations.

Local Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect Cecil County finances or operations.

Small Business Effect: Minimal overall, but potential meaningful impact on some small businesses, as discussed below.

Analysis

Current Law: In Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Cecil, Harford, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties, a person may not use, sell, possess, set, place, or maintain a snare trap. A snare trap is a device made of wire, synthetic cord, or other material in the form of a noose designed or set to capture an animal by the neck and includes a pole snare, a hanging snare, and a neck snare.

A person who violates any provision of Title 10 (Wildlife) of the Natural Resources Article is guilty of a misdemeanor. Various penalties apply for first and subsequent offenses. Fines collected for such violations are credited to the State Wildlife Management and Protection

Fund. Additionally, a Natural Resources Police officer, or any law enforcement officer who arrests a person for violating Title 10 of the Natural Resources Article, may seize every bird, mammal, reptile, and amphibian unlawfully caught, sold, offered for sale, transported, or possessed. The Department of Natural Resources may dispose of any seized species of wildlife at the department's discretion.

Small Business Effect: Certain types of businesses, such as wildlife damage control operators/trappers, may benefit from the bill's changes. By allowing these entities to use snare traps in Cecil County, these businesses may be able to expand their services.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 955 of 2020, a similar bill as amended, passed the House and was referred to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken.

Designated Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 3, 2021
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