A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission – Atlantic Menhaden – Prohibition
on Commercial Reduction Fishing

FOR the purpose of requesting the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to consider prohibiting the commercial reduction fishing of Atlantic menhaden, including the use of purse seines and spotter planes, in the Chesapeake Bay; and generally relating to Atlantic menhaden.

WHEREAS, Atlantic menhaden are ecologically and economically important to the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic coast; and

WHEREAS, Atlantic menhaden create a vital connection between the bottom and top of the food chain by eating plankton and, in turn, becoming a rich food source for many predators, including rockfish, osprey, and bald eagles; and

WHEREAS, The Atlantic menhaden commercial fishery consists of a bait fishery and a reduction fishery in which fish are “reduced” into fish meal, fish oil, and fish solubles; and

WHEREAS, The Atlantic menhaden fishery is managed under a plan developed and adopted by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, which represents all coastal states from Maine to Florida; and

WHEREAS, Despite the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission’s cap on the commercial harvest of Atlantic menhaden, the cap was exceeded in 2019; and

WHEREAS, Spotter planes and purse seines are used in the commercial reduction fishery to locate and catch Atlantic menhaden; and

WHEREAS, Atlantic menhaden have been the highest or among the highest poundage landings of any fish species on the East Coast for many years, with the poundings predominantly occurring by the use of purse seines; now, therefore, be it
RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That, in order to maintain a sustainable Atlantic menhaden fishery, the General Assembly requests the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to consider prohibiting the commercial reduction fishing of Atlantic menhaden, including the use of purse seines and spotter planes, in the Chesapeake Bay; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of Legislative Services to the Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor of Maryland; the Honorable William C. Ferguson, IV, President of the Senate of Maryland; and the Honorable Adrienne A. Jones, Speaker of the House of Delegates.