

SENATE BILL 301

M1

5lr1832

By: **Senator Salling**

Introduced and read first time: January 13, 2025

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Natural Resources – Removal and Storage of Abandoned or Sunken Vessels –**
3 **Funding**

4 FOR the purpose of authorizing the Department of Natural Resources to use funds
5 budgeted for the Natural Resources Police to remove or store certain abandoned or
6 sunken vessels; and generally relating to the removal of abandoned or sunken
7 vessels.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
9 Article – Natural Resources
10 Section 8–721(a) and (b)
11 Annotated Code of Maryland
12 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

13 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
14 Article – Natural Resources
15 Section 8–721(j)
16 Annotated Code of Maryland
17 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

18 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
19 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

20 **Article – Natural Resources**

21 8–721.

22 (a) In this section, “abandoned or sunken vessel” means any vessel that:

23 (1) Is left illegally or has remained without permission for more than 30
24 days on public property, including public marinas, docks, or boatyards;

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (2) Has remained at the following locations for more than 60 days without
2 the consent of the owner or person in control of the property:

3 (i) A private marina or property operated by a private marina; or

4 (ii) A private boatyard or property operated by a private boatyard;

5 (3) Has remained at the following locations for more than 30 days without
6 the consent of the owner or person in control of the property:

7 (i) A private dock; or

8 (ii) At or near waters' edge on private property;

9 (4) Has remained on private property other than the private property
10 described in items (2) and (3) of this subsection for more than 180 days without the consent
11 of the owner or person in control of the property; or

12 (5) (i) Has been found adrift or unattended in or upon the waters of the
13 State and:

14 1. Is found in a condition of disrepair;

15 2. Presents a hazard or obstruction to the use of the waters
16 of the State; or

17 3. Presents a potential health or environmental hazard; and

18 (ii) Is not:

19 1. Historic property as defined in § 5A–301 of the State
20 Finance and Procurement Article; or

21 2. Submerged archaeological historic property as defined in
22 § 5A–333 of the State Finance and Procurement Article.

23 (b) (1) The Department may seize, remove, and take into custody any
24 abandoned or sunken vessel.

25 (2) For this purpose, the Department may use its own personnel,
26 equipment, and facilities or use other persons, equipment, and facilities for removing,
27 preserving, or storing abandoned or sunken vessels.

28 (3) The Department, or a person removing, preserving, or storing an
29 abandoned or sunken vessel on behalf of the Department, may not be held liable for any

1 damage to an abandoned or sunken vessel which may occur during removal, storage, or
2 custody of the vessel.

3 (j) The Department may [not] use funds budgeted for the Natural Resources
4 Police for the purpose of removing or storing abandoned or sunken vessels under this
5 section.

6 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
7 1, 2025.