

# HOUSE BILL 947

M2

EMERGENCY BILL

6lr3556  
CF 6lr3358

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By: **Delegates Sample–Hughes, Adams, Anderson, Arentz, Beauchamp, Hartman,  
Hutchinson, Jacobs, Nawrocki, and Szeliga**

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2026

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Department of Natural Resources – Commercial Blue and Flathead Catfish**  
3 **Finfish Trotline License – Alterations**

4 FOR the purpose of altering the commercial blue and flathead catfish finfish trotline license  
5 to allow a person to catch blue catfish with certain gear; and generally relating to  
6 the commercial blue and flathead catfish finfish trotline license.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
8 Article – Natural Resources  
9 Section 4–701.2  
10 Annotated Code of Maryland  
11 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

14 **Article – Natural Resources**

15 4–701.2.

16 (a) There is a commercial blue and flathead catfish [finfish trotline] license.

17 (b) (1) The license authorizes the holder to catch for sale [blue and flathead]  
18 **IN THE TIDAL WATERS OF THE STATE:**

19 **(i) BLUE CATFISH USING, AS DEFINED IN DEPARTMENT**  
20 **REGULATIONS:**

21 **1. A FINFISH TROTLINE; OR**

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1                                   **2.     A GILL NET WITH A MESH SIZE OF NOT MORE THAN 7**  
2 **INCHES; AND**

3                                   **(II)   FLATHEAD** catfish [in the tidal waters of the State] using a  
4 finfish trotline, as defined in Department regulations.

5                   (2)     A licensee shall fish in accordance with Department regulations.

6           (c)     A person who wishes to obtain the license shall complete and submit an  
7 application for the license to the Department or any person designated by the Department.

8           (d)     An applicant for the license does not need to hold a tidal fish license under §  
9 4–701 of this subtitle to be eligible for the license.

10          (e)     The term of the license is 1 year from September 1 through August 31 the  
11 following year.

12          (f)     The annual license fee is \$15.

13          (g)     A licensee may not transfer a license issued under this section.

14          (h)     A licensee shall have a commercial blue and flathead catfish [finfish trotline]  
15 license in the licensee's possession when the licensee fishes under the license.

16               SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act is an emergency  
17 measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health or safety, has  
18 been passed by a yea and nay vote supported by three-fifths of all the members elected to  
19 each of the two Houses of the General Assembly, and shall take effect from the date it is  
20 enacted.