

SENATE BILL 755

M2, P3

EMERGENCY BILL

6lr3487

By: **Senators Muse and Hershey**

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Natural Resources – Striped Bass Recreational Seasons and Fisheries**
3 **Regulations**

4 FOR the purpose of prohibiting the Department of Natural Resources from establishing a
5 recreational catch and release season for striped bass; requiring the Department to
6 establish certain recreational and charter boat summer and fall striped bass seasons
7 and a trophy season for striped bass; requiring the Department to complete and
8 submit to certain State entities for review an economic impact statement for any
9 proposed fisheries regulations identified by the Department as having a major
10 impact on interested stakeholders; and generally relating to recreational fishing
11 seasons for striped bass and fisheries regulations.

12 BY adding to

13 Article – Natural Resources
14 Section 4–731.1
15 Annotated Code of Maryland
16 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

17 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

18 Article – State Government
19 Section 10–110(a), (b), and (c)(1)(i), (2)(i), and (3)
20 Annotated Code of Maryland
21 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

22 BY adding to

23 Article – State Government
24 Section 10–110(b–1)
25 Annotated Code of Maryland
26 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



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

3 **Article – Natural Resources**

4 **4-731.1.**

5 **(A) THE DEPARTMENT MAY NOT ESTABLISH A CATCH AND RELEASE SEASON**
6 **FOR STRIPED BASS, COMMONLY KNOWN AS ROCKFISH.**

7 **(B) (1) THE DEPARTMENT ANNUALLY SHALL ESTABLISH A**
8 **RECREATIONAL AND CHARTER BOAT SUMMER AND FALL STRIPED BASS SEASON**
9 **BEGINNING MAY 16 EACH YEAR AND ENDING DECEMBER 10 EACH YEAR.**

10 **(2) FOR THE RECREATIONAL SUMMER AND FALL STRIPED BASS**
11 **SEASON, A PERSON:**

12 **(I) MAY NOT CATCH OR POSSESS MORE THAN ONE STRIPED**
13 **BASS PER DAY; AND**

14 **(II) MAY USE AS BAIT SHAD OR ARTIFICIAL LURES DESIGNED TO**
15 **MIMIC SHAD THAT ARE OF ANY SIZE.**

16 **(3) FOR THE CHARTER BOAT SUMMER AND FALL STRIPED BASS**
17 **SEASON:**

18 **(I) A PERSON MAY NOT CATCH OR POSSESS MORE THAN TWO**
19 **STRIPED BASS PER DAY;**

20 **(II) NOT MORE THAN 12 LINES PER BOAT MAY BE IN THE WATER**
21 **AT ANY ONE TIME;**

22 **(III) PLANER BOARDS MAY NOT EXTEND MORE THAN 75 FEET ON**
23 **EITHER SIDE OF THE BOAT; AND**

24 **(IV) NOT MORE THAN 75 SPOT FISH PER PERSON MAY BE ON**
25 **BOARD THE BOAT FOR BAIT.**

26 **(C) (1) THE DEPARTMENT ANNUALLY SHALL ESTABLISH A TROPHY**
27 **SEASON FOR STRIPED BASS.**

28 **(2) (I) THE 2026 TROPHY SEASON FOR CATCHING STRIPED BASS**
29 **IS:**

1. **FROM APRIL 17 THROUGH APRIL 19, INCLUSIVE;**
2. **FROM APRIL 24 THROUGH APRIL 26, INCLUSIVE; AND**
3. **FROM MAY 1 THROUGH MAY 3, INCLUSIVE.**

4 (II) IN 2027 AND EACH YEAR THEREAFTER, THE DEPARTMENT
5 SHALL ESTABLISH A TROPHY SEASON FOR STRIPED BASS THAT CONSISTS OF:

(3) DURING TROPHY SEASON, A PERSON MAY NOT CATCH OR POSSESS STRIPED BASS THAT ARE LESS THAN 28 INCHES IN LENGTH.

Article – State Government

16 10-110.

17 (a) Except for subsection (c) of this section, this section does not apply to a
18 regulation adopted under § 10-111(b) of this subtitle.

25 (B-1) AT LEAST 15 DAYS BEFORE THE DATE A PROPOSED REGULATION
26 GOVERNING FISHERIES IS SUBMITTED TO THE MARYLAND REGISTER FOR
27 PUBLICATION UNDER § 10-112 OF THIS SUBTITLE, THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL
28 RESOURCES SHALL COMPLETE AND SUBMIT TO THE COMMITTEE, THE
29 DEPARTMENT OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES, AND THE ADMINISTRATOR FOR REVIEW
30 AN ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT FOR ANY PROPOSED REGULATIONS IDENTIFIED
31 BY THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AS HAVING A MAJOR IMPACT ON
32 INTERESTED STAKEHOLDERS.

22 (iii) on posting a proposed regulation or the scope of the proposed
23 regulation on the unit's website in accordance with item (ii) of this paragraph, notify the
24 parties registered in the electronic registry established under item (i) of this paragraph
25 that the proposed regulation or the scope of the proposed regulation has been posted; and

26 (iv) prepare a compliance guide written in clear, plain English to
27 assist small businesses in complying with the proposed regulation, update the guide as
28 needed until the regulation is final, and post the guide on the unit's website.

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