

# 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.



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

**Article – Natural Resources**

**4–731.1.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- 6                   1.     **TWO PERIODS OF 3 CONSECUTIVE DAYS IN LATE**  
7 **APRIL; AND**
- 8                   2.     **ONE PERIOD OF 3 CONSECUTIVE DAYS IN LATE APRIL**  
9 **OR EARLY MAY.**

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

12                  **(4) DURING THE TROPHY SEASON, A PERSON MAY NOT USE AS BAIT**  
13 **SHAD OR ARTIFICIAL LURES DESIGNED TO MIMIC SHAD THAT ARE LESS THAN 9**  
14 **INCHES LONG OR HAVE MORE THAN ONE TRAILER HOOK.**

## 15                               **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.

19           (b) At least 15 days before the date a proposed regulation is submitted to the  
20 Maryland Register for publication under § 10–112 of this subtitle, the promulgating unit  
21 shall submit to the State Children’s Environmental Health and Protection Advisory  
22 Council established under § 13–1503 of the Health – General Article for review any  
23 proposed regulations identified by the promulgating unit as having an impact on  
24 environmental hazards affecting the health of children.

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.**

(c) (1) (i) At least 15 days before the date a proposed regulation is submitted to the Maryland Register for publication under § 10–112 of this subtitle, and in accordance with § 10–111.2(c) of this subtitle, the promulgating unit shall submit the proposed regulation to the Committee, the Department of Legislative Services, and the Administrator.

(2) (i) If the proposed regulation, either in whole or in part, submitted to the Committee and the Department of Legislative Services in accordance with paragraph (1) of this subsection includes an increase or decrease in a fee for a license to practice any business activity, business or health occupation, or business or health profession licensed or otherwise regulated under State law, the promulgating unit shall include clearly written explanatory reasons that justify the increase or decrease in the fee.

(3) If the promulgating unit estimates that the proposed regulation will have a significant small business impact, the unit shall:

(i) establish an electronic registry that allows any small business or other interested party to register to receive an electronic notification when the proposed regulation or the scope of the proposed regulation is posted on the unit's website in accordance with item (ii) of this paragraph;

(ii) post the proposed regulation or the scope of the proposed regulation on the unit's website at least 15 days before the date the proposed regulation is submitted to the Committee and the Department of Legislative Services in accordance with this section and provide an opportunity for comments on the unit's proposal;

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

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

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