



*Larry Hogan, Governor*  
*Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor*  
*Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary*  
*Allan Fisher, Deputy Secretary*

**Bill Number:** SB 455

**Short Title:** Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License and Recreational Fishing Pilot Program and Task Force

**Department's Position:** Letter of Information

**Explanation of Department's Position**

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provides the following information on SB 455.

DNR supports measures that help obtain more accurate harvest data for fisheries such as the recreational striped bass fishery. DNR also supports the concept of initiating a pilot program to acquire that data; however the bill, as currently drafted, does not establish a pilot program. DNR notes that the bill, as drafted, refers to the umbrella term used for all the license types issued under Natural Resources Article, Section 4-745. However other sections of the bill refer to specific licenses. **DNR recommends clarifying which licenses the pilot program would apply to.**

Under the requirements of the bill, DNR will need to develop processes to verify if a license holder has provided all the information required in order to maintain eligibility to purchase a license. DNR's licensing system would need to be updated with these additional checks and balances to allow customers to purchase a license online or through an approved vendor. Regulations will also need to be adopted. **DNR would request the committee's consideration in providing ample time for our department to work through these changes.**

DNR also notes that while new reporting tools can provide critical supplemental information for management, they are not a substitute for scientifically-designed surveys for catch estimation.

For any additional information, please contact our Legislative and Constituent Services Director, Bunky Luffman.