

# SenatorBailey\_FAV\_SB102.pdf

Uploaded by: Jack Bailey

Position: FAV

JACK BAILEY  
*Legislative District 29*  
Calvert and St. Mary's Counties

Budget & Taxation Committee



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January 25, 2023

**Senate Bill 102 – Natural Resources – Recreational Crabbing License – Exemption**

Dear Chairman Feldman and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to introduce Senate Bill 102 – Natural Resources – Recreational Crabbing License – Exemption. This bill would exempt individuals under the age of 16 from having to obtain a recreational crabbing license to catch or attempt to catch crabs in the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries.

Existing Maryland law includes an exemption for children under 16 from the requirement to be licensed to catch finfish. This bill is intended to mirror those provisions for crabbing. Individuals under 16 are currently not required to obtain a crabbing license if they are only using handlines or dip nets and do not exceed 2 dozen crabs per day. This exemption should cover all methods of catching crabs.

I became aware of this issue during the interim, and before that I cannot recall a time during or after my service as a Natural Resources Police Officer where children could potentially break the law by using certain methods to catch crabs. However, under the exemption as it currently exists, children who use a method of catching crabs other than handlines and dip nets and the adults supervising them could face legal consequences if caught. I believe that we need to resolve this issue before it impacts the ability of Maryland families to enjoy this tradition that is so important to our State.

Senate Bill 102 is not intended to increase the number of crabs harvested each year, but only to allow children to explore our State's natural resources with their families by treating crabbing in the same manner as fishing. I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 102. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Bailey".

Senator Jack Bailey

**SB0102\_DNR\_SWA\_EEE\_1-25-23.pdf**

Uploaded by: Sarah Widman

Position: FWA



*Wes Moore, Governor  
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor  
Josh Kurtz, Acting Secretary*

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January 25, 2023

**BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 102– First Reader**

**SHORT TITLE: Natural Resources – Natural Resources - Recreational Crabbing License - Exemption**

**DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

**EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION**

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The bill would add a specific exemption from recreational crabbing licenses for individuals under the age of 16. These individuals are currently able to harvest without a license up to two dozen male hard crabs.

The Department recommends amended language to clarify the intent of the exemptions so as not to conflict with any other current restrictions within the crab fishery. By amending the text to specify the use of collapsible traps and net rings by this user group, while still requiring the user group to comply with regulations, there is little concern of additional harvest pressure or management conflict.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

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Under current law and regulation, any individual (regardless of age) can harvest up to two dozen male blue crabs with handlines or dip nets without obtaining a recreational crabbing license. Recreational licensed exempted groups have a lower harvest limit because of the inability of fisheries managers to track harvest pressure from unlicensed individuals.

**BILL EXPLANATION**

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The bill, as introduced, provides a license exemption for individuals under the age of 16 to harvest blue crabs in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries.

Contact: Emily Wilson, Director, Legislative and Constituent Services (Acting)  
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BY:

(To be offered in the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee)

AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL 102  
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 2, strike “**License — Exemption**”; strike beginning with “exempting” in line 3 down through “purposes” in line 5 and substitute “authorizing an individual under a certain age to use certain gear described by the Department in regulation when catching or attempting to catch crabs for recreational purposes without a recreational crabbing license”; in line 6, strike “exemptions from the requirement to obtain a”; and in line 7, strike “license”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 1, strike lines 17 down through line 20, inclusive, and substitute

“AN INDIVIDUAL UNDER THE AGE OF 16 YEARS CATCHING OR ATTEMPTING TO CATCH CRABS IN THE WATERS OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY AND ITS TIDAL TRIBUTARIES WITHOUT A RECREATIONAL CRABBING LICENSE MAY USE A COLLAPSIBLE TRAP AND A NET RING AS DESCRIBED BY THE DEPARTMENT IN REGULATION.”