



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.

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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.”