

SENATE BILL 755
EMERGENCY BILL

M2, P3

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 during certain months; requiring
6 the Department to
7 establish certain recreational and charter boat summer and fall striped bass seasons
8 ~~and a trophy season for striped bass~~; requiring the Department to complete and
9 submit to certain State entities for review an economic impact statement for any
10 proposed fisheries regulations identified by the Department as having a major
11 impact on interested stakeholders; and generally relating to recreational fishing
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)

2 REPRINT OF SENATE BILL 755 as amended by SB0755/743925/1 03/06/26 at 2:41 PM

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, FROM MARCH 1 THROUGH
6 APRIL 30, INCLUSIVE,
7 FOR STRIPED BASS, COMMONLY KNOWN AS ROCKFISH.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

29 ~~(2) (i) THE 2026 TROPHY SEASON FOR CATCHING STRIPED BASS
IS:~~

3 REPRINT OF SENATE BILL 755 as amended by SB0755/743925/1 03/06/26 at 2:41 PM

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 ~~(H) 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.**

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

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

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

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

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

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.