

1995 SESSION

INTRODUCED

LD3760127

HOUSE BILL NO. 2561

Offered January 23, 1995

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 28.2-708 of the Code of Virginia, relating to limitations on crabs; penalty.*

Patrons—Behm, Christian, Cooper, Copeland, Crittenden, Darner, Jones, J.C. and Spruill; Senators: Andrews and Maxwell

Referred to Committee on Chesapeake and Its Tributaries

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 28.2-708 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 28.2-708. Limitations on sizes of crabs to be taken; inspection of catch; exemption; penalty.

A. It is unlawful for any person to catch, take or have in his possession more than ten hard crabs per United States standard bushel or thirty-five hard crabs per barrel, which ~~measure less than five inches across the shell from tip to tip of the longest spikes, or to destroy them in any manner.~~ *measure as follows:*

1. *In the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries:*

a. *Female crabs less than two and three-sixteenths inches from the tip of the rostrum to the posterior edge of the carapace; and*

b. *Male crabs less than two and five-sixteenths inches from the tip of the rostrum to the posterior edge of the carapace; and*

2. *In all other waters, crabs less than two and three-sixteenths inches from the tip of the rostrum to the posterior edge of the carapace.*

Those undersized crabs in excess of the allowance level shall be immediately returned to the water alive. ~~Adult female crabs, peeler~~ *Peeler* crabs and soft crabs are exempt from these limitations.

B. Any officer may grade or cull any number of barrels, baskets or containers of crabs in any person's possession.

If the officer finds more than ten undersize hard crabs per United States standard bushel or thirty-five per barrel, he shall seize the entire quantity of crabs in or from each such container, and the person who possessed the crabs shall immediately return them to the water. Refusal to return the crabs to the water is a separate offense from any other violation.

Crabs which have been purchased ~~by and are in the possession of a buyer and crabs which have been transported at least five miles from the nearest salt water on land by a licensed buyer~~ are exempt from this requirement.

Ð C. The Commission may change such size restrictions for a period not to exceed sixty days to respond to significant ecological changes.

Ð D. A violation of this section is a Class 3 misdemeanor.

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