1   **VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER**

2   *An Act to amend and reenact § 28.2-708 of the Code of Virginia, relating to returning undersized crabs*
3   *to the waters.*

4   [S 597]
5   Approved

6   **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**
7   **1. That § 28.2-708 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**
8   § 28.2-708. Limitations on sizes of crabs to be taken; inspection of catch; exemption; penalty.
9   A. It is unlawful for any person to catch, take or have in his possession more than ten hard crabs per
10 United States standard bushel or thirty-five hard crabs per barrel, which measure less than five inches
11 across the shell from tip to tip of the longest spikes, or to destroy them in any manner. Those
12 undersized crabs in excess of the allowance level shall be immediately returned to the water alive. Adult
13 female crabs, peeler crabs and soft crabs are exempt from these limitations.
14   B. Any officer may grade or cull any number of barrels, baskets or containers of crabs in any
15 person's possession.
16   If the officer finds more than ten undersize hard crabs per United States standard bushel or thirty-five
17 per barrel, he shall seize the entire quantity of crabs in or from each such container, and the person who
18 possessed the crabs shall immediately return them to the water. Refusal to return the crabs to the water
19 is a separate offense from any other violation.
20   C. *The requirement in subsections A and B to return crabs to the waters shall apply to crabs taken*
21 *and in possession of a crabber or catcher but shall not apply to* crabs which have been purchased by
22 and are in the possession of a buyer ~~and~~ ~~crabs~~ *, nor shall it apply to crabs* which have been transported
23 at least five miles from the nearest salt water ~~are~~ ~~exempt~~ ~~from~~ ~~this~~ ~~requirement~~.
24   D. The Commission may change such size restrictions for a period not to exceed sixty days to
25 respond to significant ecological changes.
26   E. A violation of this section is a Class 3 misdemeanor.