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HOUSE BILL NO. 1724

House Amendments in [] - January 21, 2011

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 28.2-707 of the Code of Virginia, relating to restrictions on crab dredging.*

Patron Prior to Engrossment—Delegate Knight

Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 28.2-707 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 28.2-707. Restrictions on crab dredging; penalty.

A. It is unlawful for any boat licensed to dredge crabs to use more than two dredges at any time when dredging for crabs. Such boat may use only one dredge on each side of the boat or join two dredges together for use over the stern of the boat. The size of dredges shall not exceed limits established by the Commission. The Commission is authorized to promulgate regulations limiting the size of dredges.

B. It is unlawful to dislodge crabs from the bottom with a crab dredge using hydraulic methods.

C. It is unlawful to use a crab dredge on Saturday.

D. It is unlawful to use a dredge for catching crabs between April 1 and December 1; however, the Commission, when in its judgment it is advisable due to weather conditions or for purposes relating to the conservation of the blue crab and it is not contrary to the public interest, may close a season in its entirety, may open any season as early as November 16, may delay opening any season, may extend any season until April 16 and may close any single crab dredging season early [, or portion thereof,] or two or more consecutive crab dredging seasons [, or portions thereof] .

E. It is unlawful to use dredges to take crabs in any of the rivers, or their estuaries, inlets, or creeks, except on the ocean side of Accomack and Northampton Counties.

Any person who violates any provision of this section is guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor.

ENGROSSED

HB1724E