

WHEREAS, A delay in the application process for a tidal fish license would allow the Department of Natural Resources to manage fish stocks and catch limits better than it can now because a mandatory delay in the application process could clearly indicate the number of possible fishermen in future years; and

WHEREAS, A delay in the application process would slow down the influx of fishermen during good fishing seasons and, thus, prevent over-fishing during good seasons, which reduces fish stocks drastically; and

WHEREAS, A delay in the application process would instill public confidence that the harvest of tidal fish is well managed and healthful; and

WHEREAS, A delay in the application process would allow people to learn more about conservation measures for fish stocks and to understand the financial requirements of the fishery before the person invests money in a boat and the required fishing gear; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article - Natural Resources

4-703.

(A) (1) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO ANY PERSON WHO AFTER ~~JULY 17~~ SEPTEMBER 1, 1988 APPLIES FOR A NEW TIDAL FISH LICENSE UNDER § 4-701 OF THIS SUBTITLE TO CATCH CRABS WITH MORE THAN 50 CRAB POTS, FINFISH, OYSTERS, OR CLAMS.

(2) THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO ANY PERSON WHO:

(I) APPLIES TO RENEW A ~~VALID~~ TIDAL FISH LICENSE, INCLUDING A ~~VALID~~ LICENSE ON INACTIVE STATUS THAT WAS VALID ON SEPTEMBER 1, 1988;

(II) QUALIFIES UNDER § 4-705 OF THIS SUBTITLE TO RENEW A TIDAL FISH LICENSE WITHIN 1 YEAR OF COMPLETION OF ACTIVE MILITARY SERVICE; OR

(III) BEFORE APPLYING FOR A NEW TIDAL FISH LICENSE, HAS HELD A COMMERCIAL FISHING LICENSE IN ANOTHER STATE FOR 24 CONSECUTIVE MONTHS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE DATE OF APPLICATION AND MEETS OTHER REQUIREMENTS FOR ISSUANCE OF A MARYLAND LICENSE.

(B) AFTER ~~JULY 17~~ SEPTEMBER 1, 1988, THE DEPARTMENT MAY NOT ISSUE A NEW TIDAL FISH LICENSE TO AN APPLICANT TO CATCH CRABS