



Substitute House Bill No. 6222

Public Act No. 25-14

***AN ACT CONCERNING THE TAKING OF EASTERN OYSTERS AND
INVASIVE AQUATIC SPECIES.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) The Commissioner of Agriculture shall review the results of a study conducted by an in-state university-based marine research, education and outreach program on the appropriate minimum length for eastern oysters to be taken in the state upon the commissioner's receipt of such results from such program immediately following the conclusion of such study. In reviewing such study, the commissioner may consult with scientific experts concerning such appropriate minimum length. Not later than February 1, 2026, the commissioner, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, shall issue a detailed recommendation concerning the minimum length for the taking of such eastern oysters to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the environment. The commissioner's recommendation concerning such minimum length shall be based on the conclusions of any such review and scientific consultations as to the minimum length that enables the optimal health condition of the oysters taken and the state's oyster beds.

Sec. 2. Section 26-45 of the general statutes is repealed and the

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following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

No person shall possess for the purpose of sale, sell or offer for sale any bait species without first obtaining a bait dealer's license from the commissioner, provided the provisions of this section shall not apply to persons issued a commercial hatchery license under section 26-149 or to any person operating a food service establishment that is regulated pursuant to the public health code when such bait species purchased by such person is prepared as food for human consumption and is not resold for any other purpose. Application forms for such license shall be furnished by the commissioner. Such license shall be nontransferable. The fee for each such license shall be sixty-three dollars annually. Each such license shall expire on the last day of December next after issuance. Each such licensed bait dealer may possess and sell only such bait species as shall be authorized under regulations issued by the commissioner, provided live carp and goldfish shall not be possessed for any purpose on premises used by licensed bait dealers. Each such licensee shall keep such records relating to the operation of such business as the commissioner determines on forms furnished by the commissioner and shall file such report with the commissioner within thirty days after the expiration of such license. No such report shall contain any material false statement. Failure to file such report shall be a violation of this section and the commissioner may refuse to reissue such license until the licensee complies with this requirement. Representatives of the commissioner may enter upon the premises of bait dealers at any time to inspect required records and the bait species possessed and to detect violations of this section and regulations issued hereunder by the commissioner, and such representatives may confiscate and dispose of any fish illegally possessed. Any person who violates any provision of this section or any such regulation issued by the commissioner shall be guilty of a class D misdemeanor.