
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5417

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SEASON FOR THE TAKING OF GLASS EELS.

SUMMARY:

This bill eliminates the ban and \$250 fine on taking glass and elver eels in state waters. It requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) commissioner to adopt regulations establishing and regulating glass, but not elver, eel fishing by June 1, 2016 (see BACKGROUND).

Connecticut is a member of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC), a coastal fishing compact of 15 states, which currently bans glass eel fishing in all member states except Maine and South Carolina. ASMFC is currently considering amending the American eel management plan, including consideration of (1) keeping the current ban, (2) completely closing the East Coast fishery for American eels, and (3) opening American eel fishing on a quota system for the entire East Coast.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2016

BACKGROUND

Glass and Elver Eels

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, glass eels and elver eels are not distinct species, but rather life-cycle stages of the American eel species. Glass eels are a juvenile stage where the eel is translucent. Glass eels gain pigmentation as they move from the Atlantic continental shelf into rivers and become elver eels, which are also a juvenile stage. Elver eels eventually become immature adult stage yellow eels, which take years to mature into full grown adult silver eels.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 17 Nay 11 (03/17/2014)