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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

**sHB 5364**

### ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF HORSESHOE CRABS.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill prohibits hand-harvesting horseshoe crabs from any Stratford shoreline area between Stratford Point and Sniffen Point. It makes a violation an infraction, which is payable by mail.

The bill also requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) commissioner, by January 1, 2020, to submit recommendations to the Environment Committee on (1) establishing restricted areas for horseshoe crab harvesting and (2) any changes to the horseshoe crab harvesting season. These recommendations are intended to preserve Connecticut's horseshoe crab population.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

#### **BACKGROUND**

The DEEP commissioner regulates horseshoe crab harvesting under state law and regulation (CGS § 26-159a and Conn. Agencies Regs. § 26-159a-17). The regulation (1) generally prohibits a person from taking, possessing, or landing horseshoe crabs without a current license and endorsement and (2) establishes the horseshoe crab fishing season and other restrictions. It also prohibits hand-harvesting horseshoe crabs in certain designated areas of Westbrook, West Haven, and Milford. By law, a violation of the regulation is an infraction.

#### **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 29      Nay 0      (03/14/2018)