



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 80

February Session, 2018

Substitute House Bill No. 5364

House of Representatives, March 28, 2018

The Committee on Environment reported through REP. DEMICCO of the 21st Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF HORSESHOE CRABS.

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) No person shall engage
2 in the hand-harvest of horseshoe crabs from any area of the shoreline
3 located in the town of Stratford between Stratford Point and Sniffen
4 Point.

5 (b) Any person who violates the provisions of subsection (a) of this
6 section shall have committed an infraction.

7 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) Not later than January 1, 2020,
8 the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection shall
9 submit recommendations to the joint standing committee of the
10 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the
11 environment on the establishment of any restricted areas for the taking
12 of horseshoe crabs in the state and any changes to the season for the
13 taking of horseshoe crabs in the state for the purpose of preserving the
14 horseshoe crab population in the state.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section

ENV *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill prohibits hand-harvesting horseshoe crabs from any Stratford shoreline area. Currently, the harvest of horseshoe crabs is prohibited in other shoreline towns.

The bill is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact as it is expected that any enforcement can be performed by existing staff within the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP).

While the bill creates a new violation for hand-harvesting crabs in specified areas, this is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact. There have been no incidences of horseshoe crab activity in the past two years.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

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)