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HOUSE BILL NO. 19

Offered January 10, 2024

Prefiled December 12, 2023

A *BILL to direct the Virginia Institute of Marine Science in collaboration with the Marine Resources Commission and certain stakeholders to study the ecology, fishery impacts, and economic importance of the Atlantic menhaden population in the waters of the Commonwealth; report.*

Patron—Ware

Referred to Committee on Rules

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. *That the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) in collaboration with the Marine Resources Commission and with the cooperation of relevant stakeholders, including recreational anglers, the reduction and bait fishery sectors, and nongovernmental organizations, shall conduct a three-year study of the ecology, fishery impacts, and economic importance of the Atlantic menhaden population in the waters of the Commonwealth. The study shall address (i) the seasonal abundance of Atlantic menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay; (ii) the movement rates of Atlantic menhaden between the Atlantic coast and the Chesapeake Bay; (iii) the impacts of predator demand and consumption of Atlantic menhaden on the Atlantic menhaden population; (iv) the spatial and temporal patterns of the Atlantic menhaden commercial fishing effort in the Chesapeake Bay; (v) the possibility of localized depletion of Atlantic menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay; (vi) changes in recreational fisheries in the Chesapeake Bay; (vii) the economic impacts of management decisions on the Atlantic menhaden fisheries and related industries; (viii) the social and economic importance of Atlantic menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay region; and (ix) the bioeconomic impact of fisheries removing Atlantic menhaden from the waters of the Commonwealth. VIMS shall report its findings and any recommendations to the Chairmen of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources, the House Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources, and the Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources by October 1, 2027.*

INTRODUCED

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