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1 **HOUSE BILL NO. 389**

2 Offered January 14, 2026

3 Prefiled January 12, 2026

4 *A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Article 1 of Chapter 2 of Title 28.2 a section numbered*
5 *28.2-208.4, relating to Marine Resources Commission; fisheries climate adaptation plan; report.*

6 Patron—Askew

7 Committee Referral Pending

8 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**9 **1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Article 1 of Chapter 2 of Title 28.2 a section**
10 **numbered 28.2-208.4 as follows:**11 **§ 28.2-208.4. Fisheries climate adaptation plan; report.**12 A. The Commission, in collaboration with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, shall develop and
13 maintain a fisheries climate adaptation plan that utilizes the best available science to consider climate-driven
14 impacts to Virginia fisheries and aquaculture and identifies adaptive management strategies and research
15 needs necessary to safeguard the economic and environmental health of Virginia fisheries. To aid in the
16 development of such plan, the Commission shall convene a technical advisory committee that includes
17 representatives from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, the Virginia Institute of Marine Science
18 Eastern Shore Lab, the Virginia Seafood Agricultural Research and Extension Center at Virginia Polytechnic
19 Institute and State University, the Shellfish Growers Association of Virginia, the Chesapeake Bay
20 Foundation, the Virginia Waterman's Association, the Virginia Seafood Council, the James River
21 Association, the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, Virginia Commonwealth University's School of Life
22 Sciences and Sustainability, the Virginia Climate Center at George Mason University, the Virginia Coastal
23 Zone Management Program, a rural coastal planning district commission, the Institute for Coastal Adaption
24 and Resilience at Old Dominion University, and the Friends of the Rappahannock.

25 B. The fisheries climate adaptation plan developed pursuant to subsection A shall include:

26 1. A summary of environmental changes associated with climate change, including changes in water
27 temperature, acidification, rainfall patterns, wind, and deoxygenation;28 2. A review of management actions previously taken by the Commission and other fisheries management
29 bodies along the Atlantic coast to prepare for and adapt Virginia fisheries to climate change;30 3. The impacts of climate change on fish and fish habitats, including oyster reefs, submerged aquatic
31 vegetation, and tidal marshes;32 4. The impacts of climate change on marine ecosystems, fishery resources, and coastal communities,
33 including seafood landing facilities;34 5. Identification of knowledge and funding gaps needed for fisheries management bodies to prepare and
35 adapt fisheries for the impacts of climate change;36 6. Recommendations for how the Commission can better prepare fishing and aquaculture industries and
37 coastal communities for the impacts of climate change;

38 7. Identification of fisheries that may develop or contract as a result of climate change;

39 8. A socioeconomic baseline assessment of Virginia fishing industries and coastal communities, including
40 employment data, economic value, dependence on fisheries, and regional vulnerability to climate change
41 impacts;42 9. Recommendations for how such plan and future updates to such plan should inform fisheries
43 management decisions, including consideration of environmental, economic, and community impacts; and44 10. Recommendations for how the General Assembly can enhance the capacity of the Commission to take
45 the management and scientific actions necessary to address climate change impacts to protect and enhance
46 Virginia fisheries.47 C. The Commission shall (i) update the plan developed pursuant to this section at least once every three
48 years and (ii) submit a report detailing such plan to the Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources, the
49 Chairs of the House Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources and the Senate
50 Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources, and the Chief Resilience Officer by
51 December 1, 2026, for the initial plan and by December 1 in any year in which such plan is updated.

INTRODUCED

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