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HOUSE BILL NO. 645

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled January 13, 2026

A BILL to amend and reenact § 28.2-234 of the Code of Virginia and to repeal § 28.2-235 of the Code of Virginia, relating to Marine Resources Commission; license tags and identification numbers; marking of commercial fishing boats, nets, and other devices.

Patron—Kent

Committee Referral Pending

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 28.2-234 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 28.2-234. License tags and identification numbers to be fastened; penalty.

A. License tags or identification numbers shall be attached and displayed in the following a manner prescribed by the Commission:

1. License tags for fixed fishery devices, including pound nets, fyke nets, crab traps, and staked gill nets, shall be fastened to one of the offshore stakes.

2. License tags for anchored gill nets and drift gill nets shall be fastened to a flagstaff or a buoy that is visible from the surface.

3. License tags for vessels using haul seines, purse nets, trawl nets, crab pots, trotlines, and crab scrapes shall be fastened at a conspicuous place on the starboard side or the mast of the vessel.

4. License tags issued for businesses purchasing seafood shall be affixed in a conspicuous place on the business establishment, boat or motor vehicle.

5. Identification numbers when issued for particular devices shall be applied by the license holder and shall be in place at all times when the gear is deployed.

B. Any such licensee who fails to properly attach or display such a license tag or identification number is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

2. That § 28.2-235 of the Code of Virginia is repealed.