

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 6

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By: **Senator Bailey**

Introduced and read first time: January 15, 2021

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission – Atlantic Menhaden – Population**
3 **Evaluation and Prohibition on Commercial Reduction Fishing**

4 FOR the purpose of requesting the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to
5 evaluate the population of Atlantic menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay; requiring the
6 Commission to consider prohibiting the commercial reduction fishing of Atlantic
7 menhaden, including the use of purse seines and spotter planes, in the Chesapeake
8 Bay; and generally relating to Atlantic menhaden.

9 WHEREAS, Atlantic menhaden are ecologically and economically important to the
10 Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic coast; and

11 WHEREAS, Atlantic menhaden create a vital connection between the bottom and
12 top of the food chain by eating plankton and, in turn, becoming a rich food source for many
13 predators, including rockfish, osprey, and bald eagles; and

14 WHEREAS, The Atlantic menhaden commercial fishery consists of a bait fishery and
15 a reduction fishery in which fish are “reduced” into fish meal, fish oil, and fish solubles; and

16 WHEREAS, The Atlantic menhaden fishery is managed under a plan developed and
17 adopted by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, which represents all coastal
18 states from Maine to Florida; and

19 WHEREAS, Despite the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission’s cap on the
20 commercial harvest of Atlantic menhaden, the cap was exceeded in 2019; and

21 WHEREAS, Spotter planes and purse seines are used in the commercial reduction
22 fishery to locate and catch Atlantic menhaden; and

23 WHEREAS, Atlantic menhaden have been the highest or among the highest
24 poundage landings of any fish species on the East Coast for many years, with the poundings
25 predominantly occurring by the use of purse seines; now, therefore, be it



1 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the General
2 Assembly requests the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to evaluate the
3 population of Atlantic menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That, in order to maintain a sustainable Atlantic menhaden fishery,
5 the General Assembly requests the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to
6 consider prohibiting the commercial reduction fishing of Atlantic menhaden, including the
7 use of purse seines and spotter planes, in the Chesapeake Bay; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
9 Legislative Services to the Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor of Maryland; the
10 Honorable William C. Ferguson, IV, President of the Senate of Maryland; and the
11 Honorable Adrienne A. Jones, Speaker of the House of Delegates.