



HOUSE BILL 545: Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee Reforms.

2017-2018 General Assembly

Committee:	House Wildlife Resources. If favorable, re- refer to Environment	Date:	April 24, 2017
Introduced by:	Reps. Boswell, Millis, Pittman	Prepared by:	Jeff Hudson
Analysis of:	First Edition		Legislative Analyst

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 545 would enhance the role of the advisory committees to the Marine Fisheries Commission in fisheries management in the State.*

CURRENT LAW:

Under current law, the Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) is the State regulatory body for the management of the State's marine and estuarine fisheries resources. The MFC is assisted in its duties by the following advisory committees.

Three Standing Advisory Committees composed of commercial and recreational fishermen, scientists, and other persons who have expertise in the matters to be considered by the advisory committee to which they are appointed. The Standing Advisory Committees are:

- The Finfish Committee
- The Shellfish/Crustacean Advisory Committee
- The Habitat and Water Quality Committee

Two Regional Advisory Committees representing the northern and southern geographic regions of the State. The Regional Advisory Committees are:

- The Northern Regional Advisory Committee, encompassing areas from the Virginia line south through Hyde and Pamlico Counties and any counties to the west
- The Southern Regional Advisory Committee, encompassing areas from Carteret County south to the South Carolina line and any counties to the west

Fishery Management Plan Advisory Committees appointed to advise and assist the MFC in the development of Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) for the management of all of the State's commercially and recreationally significant fisheries. The Standing and Regional Advisory Committees also advise and assist the MFC in the development of FMPs.

BILL ANALYSIS:

House Bill 545 would make the following changes related to fisheries management and the role of the advisory committees:

- Direct the MFC to act consistently with State Fishery Management Plans.

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Director



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- Direct the MFC to state the basis for its rejection if it rejects the findings and recommendations of an advisory committee.
- Provide that each Standing Advisory Committee and each Regional Advisory Committee must meet at least once each calendar quarter and may hold additional meetings at the call of the Chair of the MFC.
- Direct the MFC to consult with the FMP Advisory Committee for a particular fishery before acting on a management measure considered in the development of the FMP for that fishery.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This act would become effective when it becomes law.