



HOUSE BILL 441: Shrimp Trawling Transition Program/Fees.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee:	Senate Finance. If favorable, re-refer to Rules and Operations of the Senate	Date:	June 19, 2025
Introduced by:	Reps. Iler, Goodwin, Davis, Kidwell	Prepared by:	Trina Griffin and Kyle Evans
Analysis of:	PCS to First Edition H441-CSSVxfr-22		Staff Attorneys

OVERVIEW: *The Proposed Committee Substitute for H441 would establish the Shrimp Trawl Transition Payment Program, which would provide annual payments, through October 1, 2028, to holders of a commercial fishing license with verifiable landings of shrimp between January 1, 2023, and June 30, 2025. The PCS would also temporarily increase various coastal fishing license fees. The provisions of this bill would only become effective if House Bill 442 is enacted. As of the date of this summary, House Bill 442 would, in part, prohibit the use of trawl nets to take shrimp in coastal fishing waters or the Atlantic Ocean within one-half mile of the shoreline.*

CURRENT LAW, BILL ANALYSIS, & EFFECTIVE DATES: The Proposed Committee Substitute for House Bill 441 would do the following:

Establish the Shrimp Trawl Transition Payment Program

Section 1(a) would establish the Shrimp Trawl Transition Program (Program) within the Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Marine Fisheries (Division). Funding for the Program shall come from the North Carolina Commercial Fishing Resource Fund and the North Carolina Marine Resources Fund, which collect fees from the sale of commercial and recreational license fees. The Program shall be used to provide annual transition payments to eligible holders of commercial fishing licenses with verifiable landings of shrimp between January 1, 2023 and June 30, 2025 (reporting period). To be eligible for a Program payment, a person must:

- Have held either a Standard or Retired Commercial Fishing License at any time during the reporting period.
- Reported, on trip tickets submitted to the Division, the sale of shrimp caught by trawl net during the reporting period.

Section 1(b) would clarify that a person who continues to harvest shrimp using legal gear, or in a legal area, would retain eligibility for the Program.

Section 1(c) would require a Program applicant to submit to the Division documentation verifying that the applicant meets the Program criteria no later than December 1, 2025.

Section 1(d) establishes the criteria by which the Division would award Program payments. Annual payments would be capped at the sum of the value of eligible shrimp trip tickets submitted during the reporting period and \$180. For applicants with more than one commercial fishing license, the amount awarded would be the sum of the trip tickets associated with the license with the highest reported shrimp landings and \$180. The Division must collect all of the required trip ticket data no later than December 1,

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2025, and is authorized to prorate payments if the demand for Program payments exceeds the available funding.

Section 1(e) would require the Department to report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources and the Fiscal Research Division no later than October 1, 2025, and annually thereafter until all funds are expended or the Program expires containing, at a minimum, information about the number of Program applicants, the number and amount of payments awarded, and the funding data.

This section would only become effective if House Bill 442, 2025 Regular Session, becomes law. If House Bill 442 becomes law, this section would become effective when it becomes law and would expire on October 1, 2028.

Increase Coastal Fishing License Fees

Section 2(a) would increase from \$400 to \$580 the fee for a resident of this State to obtain a Standard Commercial Fishing License (SCFL) and from \$400 to \$2,000 the minimum fee charged to a nonresident.

Section 2(b) would increase from \$200 to \$290 the fee for a resident of this State to obtain a Retired Standard Commercial Fishing License and from \$260 to \$475 the fee charged to a nonresident.

Section 2(c) would increase the annual fees for commercial fishing vessel registration, which is based on the length of a vessel as follows:

Length of Vessel	Current Fee	Proposed Fee
≤ 18 feet	\$1.25 per foot	\$1.80 per foot
> 18 but ≤ 38 feet	\$1.90 per foot	\$2.75 per foot
> 38 but ≤ 50 feet	\$3.75 per foot	\$5.50 per foot
> 50 feet	\$7.50 per foot	\$11.00 per foot

Section 2(d) would increase from \$50 to \$75 the fee for a shellfish license.

Section 2(e) would increase from \$100 to \$150 the fee for a new fish dealer license.

Section 2(f) would increase from \$400 to \$600 the fee for a land or sell license for a vessel not having its primary situs in North Carolina.

Section 2(g) would increase from \$70 to \$100 the fee for a resident Recreational Commercial Gear License and from \$500 to \$900 for a nonresident.

Section 2(h) would increase the license fees for Coastal Recreational Fishing Licenses (CRFL) as follows:

- Annual Resident – from \$15 to \$28
- Annual Nonresident – from \$30 to \$65
- Ten-Day Resident – from \$5 to \$12
- Ten-Day Nonresident – from \$10 to \$25

Section 2(i) would increase Blanket For-Hire Captain's CRFL and the Blanket For-Hire Vessel CRFL as follows:

- Resident –
 - from \$250 to \$350 (6 or fewer passengers)
 - from \$350 to \$500 (more than 6 passengers)

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- Nonresident –
 - from \$312.50 to \$575 (6 or fewer passengers)
 - from \$437.50 to \$800 (more than 6 passengers)

This subsection would also increase from \$25 to \$36 the fee for a Resident Non-Blanket For-Hire Vessel License and from \$37.50 to \$70 the fee for a Nonresident Non-Blanket For-Hire Vessel License.

Section 2(j) would increase from \$150 to \$215 the fee for a block of Ten-Day CRFLs.

Section 2(k) would increase from \$65 to \$91 the fee for an Annual Resident Unified Sportsman/CRFL and from \$40 to \$58 the fee for an Annual Resident Unified Inland/CRFL.

This section would only become effective if House Bill 442, 2025 Regular Session, is enacted. If House Bill 442 is enacted, these fee increases would become effective July 1, 2025, and apply to licenses issued on or after that date and would expire June 30, 2028.