**An Act To Limit Eligibility for Commercial Menhaden Fishing Licenses**

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

**Sec.** **1. 12 MRSA §6502-C, sub-§1-A** is enacted to read:

**1-A.** **Commercial menhaden fishing license eligibility in 2023.**  The commissioner may not issue a 2023 resident commercial menhaden fishing license or 2023 nonresident commercial menhaden fishing license to an individual unless that individual:

A. Possessed a license to fish commercially for menhaden in 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021; and

B.  According to department records, reported legal landings of menhaden of 25,000 pounds or more in 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021.

**Sec.** **2. 12 MRSA §6502-C, sub-§1-B** is enacted to read:

**1-B.** **Commercial menhaden fishing license eligibility after 2023.**  The commissioner may not issue a resident commercial menhaden fishing license or a nonresident commercial menhaden fishing license to an individual in any year subsequent to 2023 unless that individual possessed that license in the previous calendar year.

**SUMMARY**

This bill, beginning in 2023, limits eligibility for commercial menhaden fishing licenses to those individuals who held a license to fish commercially for menhaden in any year from 2016 to 2021 and landed 25,000 pounds or more of menhaden in at least one of those years. It provides that the Commissioner of Marine Resources may not issue a resident commercial menhaden fishing license or a nonresident commercial menhaden fishing license to any individual in any year subsequent to 2023 unless that individual possessed that license in the previous calendar year.