



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 1478

H.P. 970

House of Representatives, April 3, 2025

An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Baitfish Wholesaler's Licenses

Reference to the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative STROUT of Harrington.
Cosponsored by Senator MOORE of Washington and
Representatives: BRIDGEO of Augusta, CRAY of Palmyra, SOBOLESKI of Phillips,
THORNE of Carmel, TUELL of East Machias, WHITE of Guilford.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §12551-A, sub-§6, ¶A**, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B,
3 §259 and affected by §422, is amended by amending subparagraph (3) to read:

4 (3) Designate others to assist the holder in selling live baitfish at the holder's
5 business facility; ~~and~~

6 **Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §12551-A, sub-§6, ¶A**, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B,
7 §259 and affected by §422, is amended by amending subparagraph (4) to read:

8 (4) Transport live baitfish or designate another to transport live baitfish on the
9 license holder's behalf; ~~and~~

10 **Sec. 3. 12 MRSA §12551-A, sub-§6, ¶A**, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B,
11 §259 and affected by §422, is amended by enacting a new subparagraph (5) to read:

12 (5) Use the services of up to 2 unlicensed individuals to assist in the harvest
13 operations, including preparing baitfish trap settings, checking baitfish traps,
14 tending capture nets, transporting baitfish and other activities associated with
15 baitfish harvesting in inland waters, as long as the unlicensed individuals remain
16 under direct supervision of the license holder.

17 **Sec. 4. 12 MRSA §12551-A, sub-§6, ¶B**, as amended by PL 2023, c. 431, §§18
18 and 19 and affected by §23, is further amended by repealing subparagraph (5).

19 **Sec. 5. 12 MRSA §12551-A, sub-§6, ¶B**, as amended by PL 2023, c. 431, §§18
20 and 19 and affected by §23, is further amended by amending subparagraph (6) to read:

21 (6) Possess at that person's place of business any species of fish that may not
22 legally be sold as bait; ~~or~~

23 **Sec. 6. 12 MRSA §12551-A, sub-§6, ¶B**, as amended by PL 2023, c. 431, §§18
24 and 19 and affected by §23, is amended by enacting a new subparagraph (7) to read:

25 (7) Attempt to take from the inland waters live baitfish for resale using drop nets
26 through the ice unless the license holder marks all holes made in the ice by that
27 license holder for that purpose. The holes must be marked either by evergreen
28 boughs placed around the hole or by suspending at least one strand of fluorescent
29 biodegradable tape at least 3 feet above the ice around the entire perimeter of the
30 hole so that the tape is visible from all sides.

31 **SUMMARY**

32 This bill amends the authorizations and restrictions applying to baitfish wholesaler's
33 licenses. The bill allows a license holder to use the services of up to 2 unlicensed
34 individuals to assist in harvest operations in inland waters of the State as long as the
35 unlicensed individuals remain under the direct supervision of the license holder. The bill
36 removes the restriction that prohibits a license holder from taking or selling suckers, also
37 known as Genus Catostomus, greater than 10 inches in length between April 1st and
38 September 30th of each year. Finally, the bill prohibits a license holder from attempting to
39 take from inland waters live baitfish for resale using drop nets through the ice unless the
40 license holder sufficiently marks the holes in the ice by evergreen boughs or fluorescent
41 biodegradable tape.