



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 728

H.P. 467

House of Representatives, February 25, 2025

An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding Smelt Fishing

Received by the Clerk of the House on February 20, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

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

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative DILL of Old Town.
Cosponsored by Representatives: BRIDGEO of Augusta, DRINKWATER of Milford,
HEPLER of Woolwich, MASON of Lisbon, THORNE of Carmel.

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

2 **Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §12602**, as amended by PL 2019, c. 224, §1 to 4 and c. 325, §7,
3 is further amended by enacting before the 2nd indented paragraph a new indented
4 paragraph to read:

5 A person may temporarily exceed smelt limits when actively fishing for smelt if the
6 fish are alive and being held in a grader or other live containment device. When a person
7 is finished fishing for the day, the person may measure the person's catch and shall
8 immediately release live smelts that exceed the daily bag limit at the water's edge.

9 **SUMMARY**

10 This bill makes clear that a person may temporarily exceed daily bag limits when
11 actively fishing for smelt as long as the fish are contained in a grader or other live
12 containment device and live fish that exceed the daily bag limit are released at the water's
13 edge when a person is finished fishing for the day. The bill also makes clear that a person
14 has the opportunity to measure the person's catch after fishing before deciding which fish
15 to release.