

OPPOSE SB 414

Topic: Withdrawal from the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Compact

Bill Patron: Senator Richard Stuart (R-25)

OVERVIEW:

SB414 would remove the Commonwealth's membership in the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Compact no later than July 1, 2027. The Compact created the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission in 1942 to serve as a fisheries management organization for the Atlantic Coast states. ASMFC coordinates the conservation and management of 27 nearshore fish species such as striped bass, Atlantic menhaden, red drum, and summer flounder. Its importance for member states and jurisdictions lies in providing a legally backed, coordinated framework to develop, implement, and enforce consistent fishery management plans across state boundaries, especially for migratory and shared stocks.

REASONS TO OPPOSE:

- A withdrawing state would forfeit its commissioners, voting rights, and direct participation on ASMFC species management boards and the Policy Board. As a result, it would lose the ability to shape the development of key management actions and the fishery science needed to support them.
- ASMFC provides a coordinated mechanism for states to manage migratory and shared fish and shellfish populations that move across state lines, reducing the “race to fish” and regulatory inconsistencies that would arise from isolated state action.
- ASMFC’s partnership-based approach enables more efficient use of limited state resources by sharing scientific information, stock assessments, and monitoring programs, thereby supporting science-based decisions without each state having to independently duplicate full analytical capacity.
- ASMFC provides states with a unified voice and a coordinated structure to work with federal partners—especially NOAA Fisheries—on funding, data collection, enforcement, and habitat initiatives that would be challenging for any single state to secure or carry out on its own.



Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Will Poston
Wposton@cbf.org
804-258-1539



Virginia Conservation Network
Rebecca Malpass, Director of Land
Conservation & Clean Water Programs
rebecca@vcnva.org
Rebecca: (281) 635-5740

This position was taken by Virginia Conservation Network (VCN)'s Legislative Committee and Board of Directors and is supported by Virginia's conservation community. For a complete list of VCN positions, visit www.vcnva.org/bill-tracker. VCN is committed to building a powerful, diverse, and highly-coordinated conservation movement focused on protecting our Commonwealth's natural resources today and for tomorrow.