
OLR Bill Analysis

SB 929

AN ACT CONCERNING PENALTIES FOR THE TAKING OF STRIPED BASS.

SUMMARY

State law authorizes the energy and environmental protection commissioner to adopt regulations on, among other things, the legal methods of sportfishing and the legal limits on possessing various species, including striped bass. The commissioner has done this (see, e.g., Conn. Agencies Regs. § 26-159a-2).

This bill eliminates the enhanced penalties in current law for violating the striped bass sportfishing regulations. By doing so, it makes a violation of the striped bass regulations an infraction (see BACKGROUND), which is the same penalty that applies to other marine district sportfishing regulation violations. Currently, most marine district sportfishing infractions are subject to a base fine of \$35, but certain additional fees and surcharges apply, which brings the total amount due to \$75.

Under current law, a person who violates the striped bass sportfishing regulations is subject to the following penalties:

1. \$100 fine for each fish taken or possessed in violation for the first violation;
2. \$200 fine for each fish taken or possessed in violation for a second violation; and
3. \$500 fine for each fish taken or possessed in violation, imprisonment of up to 30 days, or both, for a subsequent violation.

By law, the commissioner also may suspend a person's fishing

license for violating the fishing regulations (CGS § 26-61).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

BACKGROUND

Infractions

Infractions are punishable by fines, usually set by Superior Court judges, of between \$35 and \$90, plus a \$20 or \$35 surcharge and an additional fee based on the amount of the fine. (There may be other added charges depending upon the type of infraction. For example, certain motor vehicle infractions trigger a surcharge of 50% of the fine.) An infraction is not a crime, and violators can pay the fine by mail without making a court appearance.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 32 Nay 0 (03/31/2021)