



SPONSOR: Sen. Simpson & Rep. Quillen

DELAWARE STATE SENATE

141st GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE BILL NO. 279

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 7 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO COMMERCIAL FISHING.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

- 1 Section 1. Amend subsection 927(a), Title 7, Delaware Code by striking the words “or any gill net utilizing
2 rollers or reels operated either manually or by power” as they appear therein after the words “or any run around gill net”.
3 Section 2. This Act shall be effective on April 1, 2002.

SYNOPSIS

Currently, commercial gill net fishermen in Delaware are prohibited from using rollers or reels to store, set out or retrieve their gill nets. This requires gill net fishermen to store their gill nets in containers and to set and retrieve them by hand. Physically, this is very demanding. It is an inefficient and antiquated method of fishing gill nets.

With fishery management plans in effect for most of the food fishes harvested in Delaware, annual quotas and other restrictions are in effect to control the annual harvests of these food fishes and insure the species' spawning populations are sustained. The use of rollers or reels allows gill net fishermen to fish more efficiently without increasing their allowable annual harvest. The use of net rollers or reels also is considered to be a more conservative way of fishing gill nets relative to the fishing mortality of bycatch. Bycatch are fish not intended to be caught or not allowed to be possessed. Allowing for the use of net reels may encourage a fisherman to drift and continually attend his or her nets rather than anchoring them for long periods of time and tending them only once or twice a day. Anchored gill nets can cause a high mortality of bycatch resulting in wasted fish. This Act removes the restriction on the use of net reels or rollers when fishing with gill nets.

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