**South Carolina General Assembly**

124th Session, 2021-2022

**A15, R21, H3684**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

General Bill

Sponsors: Reps. Herbkersman, Erickson, Bradley and W. Newton

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Introduced in the House on January 14, 2021

Introduced in the Senate on February 24, 2021

Passed by the General Assembly on March 24, 2021

Governor's Action: April 12, 2021, Signed

Summary: Cobia

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

1/14/2021 House Introduced and read first time ([House Journal‑page 552](file:///h:\hj\20210114.docx))

1/14/2021 House Referred to Committee on **Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs** ([House Journal‑page 552](file:///h:\hj\20210114.docx))

2/9/2021 House Member(s) request name added as sponsor: Erickson, Bradley, W.Newton

2/17/2021 House Committee report: Favorable **Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs** ([House Journal‑page 4](file:///h:\hj\20210217.docx))

2/18/2021 Scrivener's error corrected

2/23/2021 House Read second time ([House Journal‑page 25](file:///h:\hj\20210223.docx))

2/23/2021 House Roll call Yeas‑114 Nays‑0 ([House Journal‑page 25](file:///h:\hj\20210223.docx))

2/24/2021 House Read third time and sent to Senate ([House Journal‑page 15](file:///h:\hj\20210224.docx))

2/24/2021 Senate Introduced and read first time ([Senate Journal‑page 9](file:///h:\sj\20210224.docx))

2/24/2021 Senate Referred to Committee on **Fish, Game and Forestry** ([Senate Journal‑page 9](file:///h:\sj\20210224.docx))

3/17/2021 Senate Committee report: Favorable **Fish, Game and Forestry** ([Senate Journal‑page 13](file:///h:\sj\20210317.docx))

3/23/2021 Senate Read second time ([Senate Journal‑page 37](file:///h:\sj\20210323.docx))

3/23/2021 Senate Roll call Ayes‑45 Nays‑0 ([Senate Journal‑page 37](file:///h:\sj\20210323.docx))

3/24/2021 Senate Read third time and enrolled ([Senate Journal‑page 16](file:///h:\sj\20210324.docx))

4/8/2021 Ratified R 21

4/12/2021 Signed By Governor

4/15/2021 Effective date 04/12/21

4/15/2021 Act No.  15

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**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[1/14/2021](file:///p:\pprever\2021-22\3684_20210114.docx)

[2/17/2021](file:///p:\pprever\2021-22\3684_20210217.docx)

[2/18/2021](file:///p:\pprever\2021-22\3684_20210218.docx)

[3/17/2021](file:///p:\pprever\2021-22\3684_20210317.docx)

(A15, R21, H3684)

**AN ACT TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 50‑5‑1713 SO AS TO PROVIDE LIMITS FOR COBIA CAUGHT IN THE WATERS OF THIS STATE AND PROHIBIT THE TAKING OR POSSESSION OF COBIA WHEN FEDERAL REGULATIONS PROVIDE FOR THE CLOSURE OF A RECREATIONAL OR COMMERCIAL COBIA FISHERY IN THE WATERS OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN; AND TO AMEND SECTION 50‑5‑2730, AS AMENDED, RELATING TO THE APPLICATION OF FEDERAL FISHING REGULATIONS IN THE WATERS OF THIS STATE, SO AS TO REMOVE THE EXCEPTION FOR COBIA.**

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

**Cobia limits established**

SECTION 1. Article 17, Chapter 5, Title 50 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 50‑5‑1713. (A) The following limits to cobia (Rachycentron canadum) are:

(1) one per person per day and no more than three per boat per day taken or possessed recreationally within the Southern Cobia Management Zone from June first to April thirtieth subject to a minimum size requirement of thirty‑six inches in fork length. It is unlawful to take or possess cobia in the Southern Cobia Management Zone from May first to May thirty‑first;

(2) one per person per day and no more than six per boat per day taken or possessed recreationally in the waters of this State outside of the Southern Cobia Management Zone subject to a minimum size requirement of thirty‑six inches in fork length;

(3) two per licensed commercial fisherman per day and no more than six per boat per day taken or possessed commercially subject to a minimum size requirement of thirty‑three inches in fork length.

(B) It is unlawful to sell cobia taken from the waters of this State. All cobia taken commercially from waters outside of this State must be sold to a licensed wholesale dealer who also is a federally permitted dealer.

(C) It is unlawful to take or possess cobia when federal regulations provide for the closure of the recreational or commercial cobia fishery in the waters of the South Atlantic Ocean.”

**Cobia exception removed**

SECTION 2. Section 50‑5‑2730(B) of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 210 of 2018, is further amended to read:

“(B) This provision does not apply to black sea bass (Centropristis striata) whose lawful catch limit is five fish per person per day or the same as the federal limit for black sea bass, whichever is higher. The lawful minimum size is thirteen inches total length. Additionally, there is no closed season on the catching of black sea bass (Centropristis striata).”

**Time effective**

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

Ratified the 8th day of April, 2021.

Approved the 12th day of April, 2021.

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