



126th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2013

Legislative Document

No. 935

H.P. 659

House of Representatives, March 7, 2013

**An Act To Permit the Harvest of Sea Cucumbers as Bycatch of Sea
Urchin Dragging and To Allow Areas To Be Closed to Sea
Cucumber Dragging**

Reference to the Committee on Marine Resources suggested and ordered printed.

Millicent M. MacFarland
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND
Clerk

Presented by Representative KUMIEGA of Deer Isle.
Cosponsored by Representative: SAXTON of Harpswell.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §6748-E** is enacted to read:

3 **§6748-E. Sea cucumbers caught as dragging bycatch**

4 A person authorized to drag for and possess, ship, transport and sell sea urchins under
5 section 6748-A may possess, ship, transport and sell sea cucumbers caught as bycatch if
6 caught during the sea cucumber harvesting season. A person may retain sea cucumber
7 bycatch under this section only if the person is also in possession of sea urchins and may
8 not retain more than 2 fish totes per day. Sea cucumbers retained under this section must
9 be 2 inches longer than any minimum size established by the commissioner by rule under
10 section 6814. For purposes of this section, "fish tote" means one stackable standard tote
11 no more than 28 inches long by 16 inches wide by 11 inches high.

12 **Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §6801-A, sub-§1**, as enacted by PL 2005, c. 27, §1, is amended
13 to read:

14 **1. License required.** A person may not engage in the activities authorized under
15 this section without a current sea cucumber drag license except as authorized under
16 section 6748-E. A sea cucumber drag license must list the documentation or registration
17 number of the vessel to be used by the licensee when dragging.

18 **Sec. 3. 12 MRSA §6815** is enacted to read:

19 **§6815. Sea cucumber closed areas**

20 The commissioner may close an area to sea cucumber dragging in order to protect
21 lobster populations or to reduce conflicts between mobile and fixed fishing gear.

22 **SUMMARY**

23 This bill allows those authorized to engage in sea urchin dragging to possess, ship,
24 transport and sell up to 2 fish totes per day of sea cucumbers caught as bycatch if the
25 retained sea cucumbers are 2 inches longer than any minimum size established by the
26 Commissioner of Marine Resources and the person retaining the sea cucumbers is also in
27 possession of sea urchins. The bill also grants authority to the commissioner to close an
28 area to sea cucumber dragging in order to protect lobster populations or to reduce
29 conflicts between mobile and fixed fishing gear.