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**AB-1797 State crustacean.** (2023-2024)

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**Assembly Bill No. 1797**

**CHAPTER 667**

An act to add Section 425.15 to the Government Code, relating to state government.

[ Approved by Governor September 27, 2024. Filed with Secretary of State September 27, 2024. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

AB 1797, Wood. State crustacean.

Existing law establishes the state flag and the state's emblems, including, among other things, the golden poppy as the official state flower, the California redwood as the official state tree, and the California gray whale as the official state marine mammal.

This bill would establish the Dungeness crab (*Metacarcinus magister*) as the official state crustacean. The bill would also make related findings and declarations.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: no Local Program: no

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 1.** The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

- (a) In California, the most abundant crab is the *Metacarcinus magister*, or Dungeness crab.
- (b) *Metacarcinus magister*, known as Dungeness crab, is an iconic California coast specialty and has long supported fishing ports up and down northern and central California. Recreational crab fishing also bolsters local hospitality businesses, bringing patrons to incredible coastal restaurants and inns.
- (c) Dungeness crabs are an essential part of California's ecosystem and economy.
- (d) While Dungeness crabs inhabit a wide variety of ocean floor habitats, they generally prefer sandy or soft-bottom areas and are commonly found at depths ranging from the intertidal to 300 feet.
- (e) Dungeness crabs boast an impressive anatomy, featuring four pairs of armored legs, a formidable duo of claws, and an exoskeleton or protective shell that shields them from the elements.
- (f) Dungeness crabs are opportunistic predators and scavengers, feeding on bivalves, fish, shrimp, isopods, and other organisms, which contributes to a healthy ecosystem.
- (g) Both commercial and recreational crab fisheries exist in California. The fisheries have slightly different seasons within the two distinct management areas: northern and central, which are divided at the Sonoma-Mendocino County line.

(h) California Dungeness crabs are sold both domestically and exported. Typically, crabs are cooked and sold whole in the shell, or the cooked meat is picked prior to sale and sold fresh or frozen.

(i) Naming *Metacarcinus magister* as the official state crustacean of California will promote appreciation, study, and education of Dungeness crabs in this state, as both an environmental and economic commodity.

**SEC. 2.** Section 425.15 is added to the Government Code, to read:

**425.15.** The Dungeness crab (*Metacarcinus magister*) is the official state crustacean.