

RESOLUTION NO.

Unofficial Copy

H1

1996 Regular Session

6lr2983

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**By: ~~Delegates Guns, McHale, and Rawlings~~ Rawlings, Fry, Redmer, Hammen, Stup, Klausmeier, Ciliberti, and Elliott**

Rules suspended

Introduced and read first time: March 5, 1996

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

Re-referred to: Environmental Matters, March 11, 1996

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Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 25, 1996

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RESOLUTION NO.

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION \_\_\_\_

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

**2 Port of Baltimore and Related Waterways - Dredging Maintenance and Improvement**

3 FOR the purpose of recognizing the importance of shipping to the State and its economy,  
4 and the need for maintenance and improvement of the Port of Baltimore, the  
5 Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, and shipping lanes in the Chesapeake Bay; urging  
6 certain governmental agencies to study, develop, and implement a certain long-term  
7 strategy for maintenance and improvement of certain waterways, including certain  
8 beneficial use projects in certain areas; and generally relating to maintenance and  
9 improvement dredging for the State's shipping lanes.

10 WHEREAS, The shipping industry is a major component of Maryland's  
11 infrastructure, essential to the continuing economic well-being of the State; and

12 WHEREAS, There are both immediate and long-term needs for maintaining and  
13 expanding the draft and capacity of shipping lanes in the waters of the State, including  
14 the approaches to the Port of Baltimore, the main stem of the Chesapeake Bay, and the  
15 Chesapeake and Delaware Canal; and

16 WHEREAS, In order to ensure the ongoing importance of the Port of Baltimore to  
17 the State, and to bolster the position of the Port in the State's economy, Maryland needs  
18 to develop and implement a far-reaching strategy for maintenance of those major  
19 shipping channels of the State; and

20 WHEREAS, The most pressing issue in the maintenance of approaches to the Port  
21 of Baltimore and our other shipping channels is the availability of adequate capacity for  
22 placement of material dredged in maintenance operations, both in the next few years and  
23 for many years to come; and

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1           WHEREAS, There are significant environmental concerns, including nutrient  
2 releases and bay eutrophication, associated with placement of dredge material in the  
3 deep trough of the Chesapeake Bay; and

4           WHEREAS, Clean dredge material is appropriate for beneficial use in restoration  
5 of historic islands and wildlife habitats, and coastline protection; and

6           WHEREAS, Projected costs for current beneficial use proposals, such as the Poplar  
7 Island restoration, are extremely high, based on the distance of the restoration proposals  
8 from areas where maintenance dredging is needed; and

9           WHEREAS, The timely availability of capacity in current beneficial use proposals  
10 critically depends on permitting processes that are complex, overlapping, and subject to  
11 delay; and

12           WHEREAS, There exist in the upper reaches of the Chesapeake Bay at least two  
13 sites that would readily support beneficial uses of clean dredge material, reestablishing  
14 islands for recreational use and coastline protection; and

15           WHEREAS, These island restoration beneficial use projects in the upper  
16 Chesapeake Bay, closer to dredging areas near Baltimore and in the Chesapeake and  
17 Delaware Canal, would present far more cost-effective and fiscally responsible  
18 alternatives to current identified beneficial use proposals, while providing adequate  
19 capacity to meet the dredging needs of the Port of Baltimore, upper Baychannels, and  
20 the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, for decades to come; and

21           WHEREAS, The major impediment to the timely development of at least two  
22 island restoration sites in the upper Chesapeake Bay, as for the current beneficial use  
23 proposals, is the multiplicity of permitting processes involved among several agencies of  
24 the federal and State governments; now, therefore, be it

25           RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the  
26 General Assembly formally recognizes the importance of shipping to the State, and the  
27 critical need to develop and implement a comprehensive long-term strategy for  
28 maintaining and improving the approaches to the Port of Baltimore, the shipping  
29 channels of the Chesapeake Bay, and the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal; and be it  
30 further

31           RESOLVED, That the General Assembly urges the appropriate federal, State, and  
32 local governments and their agencies to cooperate fully in exploring the options available  
33 for beneficial use and containment of clean dredge material in at least two island  
34 restoration projects in the upper Chesapeake Bay, and in the development and  
35 implementation of the comprehensive long-term maintenance and improvement strategy  
36 for approaches to the Port of Baltimore, the shipping channels of the Chesapeake Bay,  
37 and the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal; and be it further

38           RESOLVED, That the General Assembly urges the appropriate federal, State, and  
39 local governments and their agencies to cooperate fully in exploring the options available  
40 for environmentally sound open water placement sites to be available primarily for  
41 short-term maintenance and improvement needs of the Port of Baltimore, rather than for  
42 fulfilling long-term requirements under the long-term strategy; and be it further

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1           RESOLVED, That the General Assembly also urges the appropriate federal, State,  
2 and local governments and their agencies to act speedily to identify and permit sites in the  
3 upper Chesapeake Bay for the beneficial use and containment of clean dredge material;  
4 and be it further

5           RESOLVED, That the General Assembly also urges the appropriate federal, State,  
6 and local governments and their agencies to complete site selection and permit approval  
7 processes for at least two upper Chesapeake Bay projects that combine containment and  
8 beneficial use designs prior to the implementation of Phase II of the Poplar Island Project  
9 and development of additional beneficial use projects in the Chesapeake Bay; and be it  
10 further

11           RESOLVED, That the General Assembly urges the Department of Transportation,  
12 the Department of the Environment, and other appropriate State agencies to design the  
13 initial containment area of the dredge placement site at Poplar Island not to exceed 640  
14 acres in area, with a dike no greater than 15 feet in height; and be it further

15           RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of  
16 Legislative Reference to the Honorable William J. Clinton, President of the United  
17 States, White House, Washington, D.C. 20500; and be it further

18           RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of  
19 Legislative Reference to the Maryland Congressional Delegation: Senators Paul S.  
20 Sarbanes and Barbara A. Mikulski, Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; and  
21 Representatives Wayne T. Gilchrest, Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., Benjamin L. Cardin, Albert  
22 R. Wynn, Steny Hamilton Hoyer, Roscoe G. Bartlett, and Constance A. Morella, House  
23 Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515; and be it further

24           RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of  
25 Legislative Reference to the Honorable Parris N. Glendening, Governor of Maryland; the  
26 Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, President of the Senate of Maryland; the Honorable  
27 Casper R. Taylor, Jr., Speaker of the House of Delegates; the Honorable Louis L.  
28 Goldstein, Comptroller of Maryland; the Honorable Richard N. Dixon, Treasurer of  
29 Maryland; the Honorable Kurt L. Schmoke, Mayor of Baltimore City; the Honorable C.A.  
30 Dutch Ruppertsberger, Baltimore County Executive; and the Honorable Oakley A.  
31 Sumpter, Jr., President, Cecil County Commissioners.