



Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary
Charles Glass, Deputy Secretary

March 4, 2020

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
251 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Dana Stein
Vice Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
251 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Letter of Information – House Bill 1353 – Natural Resources – Oyster Severance Tax – Increase

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein and Committee Members:

House Bill 1353 increases from \$1 to \$2, the severance tax on oysters caught in Maryland waters, excluding the Potomac River. The bill requires the additional \$1 to be distributed to the County Oyster Committees in specifically listed counties.

The department annually conducts multiple planting projects using these funds plus the revenue generated by the purchase of the oyster surcharge and a grant from the Maryland Department of Transportation. Planting projects occur during the spring and summer each year.

The bill would require that the department distribute half of the funds to only 9 of the 11 County Oyster Committees for replenishment of natural oyster bars within the county.

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources respectfully submits to the Committee information on House Bill 1353.

Respectfully submitted,
James W. McKitrick
Director, Legislative and Constituent Services

Contact: James W. McKitrick, Director, Legislative and Constituent Services
Jamesw.mckitrick@maryland.gov ♦ 443-510-5013