

JACK BAILEY  
Legislative District 29  
Calvert and St. Mary's Counties

Budget & Taxation Committee



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
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**Senate Bill 207 – Natural Resources – Northern Snakehead – Common Name**

Dear Chairman Korman and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to introduce Senate Bill 207, which is intended to address the challenges created from the presence of the invasive snakehead fish in Maryland's waterways. This bill seeks to encourage consumption of the snakehead as a means to better manage its population within our waters by giving the snakehead a new, more appealing common name, the "Chesapeake Channa."

As we all know, the snakehead has proven to be a threat to the ecological balance of our state. Its aggressive nature and ability to thrive in diverse environments, including those with low oxygen levels, have raised concerns among environmental experts and watermen for many years. One potential solution that has been pursued to reduce Maryland's snakehead population has been to catch them for use as food. I have had a number of discussions with stakeholders who work to increase the consumption of snakehead, and it is clear that these efforts suffer from one major problem - the snakehead has a limited market of potential consumers because of its unappetizing name.

Altering the common name of a fish has become a successful way to encourage their harvest and consumption. For example, the Dolphinfish became Mahi-mahi, the Slimehead became the Orange Roughy, the Hogfish became King Mackerel, and the Patagonian Toothfish became Chilean Sea Bass. In this case, I believe that an appetizing name is all that stands in the way of consumer acceptance. Renaming the snakehead to make it more marketable would have substantial benefits for our watermen, our economy, and our ecosystem.

This bill passed the Senate 44-2 and is identical to House Bill 19 as it passed this Committee and the House of Delegates. I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 207. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Bailey'.

Senator Jack Bailey