



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

February 26, 2020

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

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

Re: Letter of Information – House Bill 856 - Unlawful Taking of Oysters From Submerged Land Leases and Water Column Leases – Penalties

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources is providing the following information on House Bill 856.

This bill would increase the penalty for an individual who unlawfully takes oysters from an aquaculture lease. The bill also requires an individual to take a class offered by the department as part of the penalty.

The bill is not clear whether a judge needs to order the class or if the department can order a class upon conviction. The violation is not a common violation. The department would potentially be holding one-on-one classes once or twice a year for violators.

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