



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

February 10, 2021

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Chair, Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Cheryl C. Kagan
Vice Chair, Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Letter of Support – Senate Bill 442 – Aquaculture Leases and Shellfish Nursery Operations – Wetlands

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

The department supports Senate Bill 442. The bill would ease the restrictions on leaseholders from using shellfish aquaculture equipment on their docks, by exempting them from having to obtain Tidal Wetlands License authorization approval from the Board of Public Works for these activities and equipment.

This action will help resolve a longstanding permitting issue that has created operational difficulties for shellfish aquaculture businesses and restricted these activities and equipment to upland sites. The department plans to consult with the Aquaculture Coordinating Council and shellfish aquaculture industry members and stakeholders to clearly identify and describe the activities and use of equipment associated with shellfish aquaculture leasing, which are approved for use on a dock.

The department anticipates the bill would streamline the aquaculture approval process and provide for a more efficient approval process, and help this burgeoning industry. For the above reasons, the department respectfully requests the committee to grant Senate Bill 442 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

James W. McKitrick
Director, Legislative and Constituent Services

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