



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

March 24, 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 – House Bill 800 – Aquaculture Leases – Marking and Recording Requirements – Mobile Application

Dear Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources supports House Bill 800. This bill would require the department to create a mobile app that provides specified fishery areas in real time to an end user.

The department supports providing the best information possible in user-friendly methods that reach our stakeholders and the public. While there is a high fiscal note for this initiative, it is possible it could be a part of our existing Major Information Technology Development Plan for replacing our recreational licensing system. However, this effort would not reach its final phase of development until 2023.

The department supports the amendments, which resolve the concerns over the proper location of the law in the Natural Resources Article, as the app would not be specific to aquaculture and also removes references to clam bars that do not exist and all fishing gear that is not tracked. The addition of the registered pound net sites is something that can be provided in an app.

The department believes new technologies are important in providing information, but any change would require resources and time necessary to investigate apps used by other jurisdictions, costs associated with them, as well as any enforcement-related issues that would need to be addressed.

Thank you for allowing the department to provide the above information on HB 800 for the committee's thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

James W. McKitrick
Director, Legislative and Constituent Service

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