



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

March 24, 2021

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

The Honorable Dana Stein  
Vice Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee  
Room 251, House 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 as amended. The bill would require the Aquaculture Coordinating Council along with Department of Environment to study and report back to the general assembly on the easing of 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.

Changing this in the future would 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 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 focus discussions on streamlining the aquaculture approval process and help this burgeoning industry.

For the above reasons, the department respectfully requests the committee to grant SB 442 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

James W. McKitrick  
Director, Legislative and Constituent Services

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