



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

February 17, 2021

The Honorable Kumar P. 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 Information – House Bill 800 – Aquaculture Leases – Marking and Recording Requirements – Mobile Application***

Dear Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources provides the following information on House Bill 800. This bill would require the department to create a new app, continually map changing coordinates, and provide those specified 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 fiscal note for this initiative, it is possible it could be a part of DNR's 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.

In the department's estimation, HB 800 requires at least two technical amendments. The first would be moving this mapping requirement from aquaculture to Subtitle 2 of the Natural Resources Article. The user group of the mobile app seems to be a much broader audience than just those constituents interested in aquaculture. Also, while the majority of the listed areas to be included by HB 800 are already mapped, "natural clam bars" are not. Clam bottom changes annually as clams may not always be present in the same locations from year to year as in the case of oysters, and these changes cannot be predicted. In other words, clam bottom cannot be accurately mapped and should be removed from the legislation.

The department believes new technologies are important in providing information, but 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,

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Director, Legislative and Constituent Service

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