



Chesapeake  
**OYSTER ALLIANCE**  
*10 Billion for the Bay*

ANNAPOLIS AQUACULTURE - BLUE OYSTER ENVIRONMENTAL - CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION - CHESAPEAKE BEACH OYSTER CULTIVATION SOCIETY - COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION MARYLAND - FRIENDS OF ST. CLEMENTS BAY LIVING CLASSROOMS FOUNDATION - MARK STREET VENTURES LLC - PIRATES COVE OYSTER CO. - SHORERIVERS - TRUE CHESAPEAKE OYSTER CO LLC - OYSTER COMPANY OF VIRGINIA - REEFTEK, LLC - ORCHARD POINT OYSTERS

**House Bill 593**

Department of Natural Resources – Oyster Shell Dredging – Permit Application

DATE: February 16, 2022

POSITION: **OPPOSE**

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The Chesapeake Oyster Alliance is a broad coalition of non-profits, community organizations, oyster growers, academic institutions, and business owners with the shared goal of adding 10 billion oysters in the Bay by the year 2025. With a focus on oyster restoration, science-based fishery management, and increased aquaculture, the Chesapeake Oyster Alliance aims to accelerate oyster recovery efforts and in so doing the recovery of the Chesapeake Bay.

**We, the above-listed members of the Chesapeake Oyster Alliance, OPPOSE House Bill 593 and recommend a UNFAVORABLE report from the House Environment & Transportation Committee.**

From 1960-2006 nearly 200 million bushels of buried shell were removed from numerous relic oyster bars or buried shell deposits in the upper Bay and used to supplement the wild harvest oyster industry throughout various portions of the middle and lower Chesapeake. The program, frequently called the “seed and shell” or “repletion program,” was halted when available shell deposits were exhausted, and when public opposition of the program increased.

The areas previously dredged lost their three-dimensional relief degrading the habitat value to the regional ecosystem and local Bay stakeholders, including local watermen and recreational fishers.

Shell is a valuable resource for oyster restoration, wild harvest subsidies and some aquaculture operations, but shell should not be taken from existing habitat to attempt to build new habitat elsewhere in the Bay.

Since 2008, major advancements have been made in the use of alternatives to buried shell. Fresh shell recycling programs continue to grow in the region, and many alternatives have all been proven as viable substrates to replace the use of buried shell in restoration, aquaculture, and wild harvest.

For these reasons, the Chesapeake Oyster Alliance respectfully recommends an **UNFAVORABLE report for House Bill 593 from the House Environment & Transportation Committee.** Please contact David Sikorski (david@ccamd.org; (443) 621-9186) with any questions.