

TO: Senate Finance Committee Testimony on: SB 433 – Economic Development – Women and
Minority-Owned Shellfish Aquaculture Enterprise Fund Position: SUPPORT Hearing
on: February 21, 2023 Although the estimated number of oysters in the Bay fluctuates slightly, the annual
population counts show that, despite restoration efforts, the overall number of these bivalves is stagnant at less than
1% of historic populations. Given current wild oyster harvests, the only means of promoting a significant increase in
the population is to dramatically reduce harvest pressure. One way to accomplish this is to incentivize the growth of
the aquaculture fishery. Providing assistance for women- and minority-owned shellfish aquaculture businesses will
increase the number of these enterprises in Maryland by helping them overcome traditional barriers to entry and
success. We will never achieve our greatest economic potential until every citizen can participate in each sector of our
economy. Broadening the field of participants in the oyster aquaculture industry will result in a positive economic
impact for Maryland. For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to issue a favorable report on SB 433. Thank you for
your consideration,
Lani Hummel
Annapolis, MD