

HB_857_FAV_LateTestimony_DNR_ACC

Uploaded by: Brian Callum

Position: FAV



House Bill 0857

Shellfish Aquaculture – Harvest Hours

Date: February 23, 2024
To: Environment and Transportation Committee

Position: **FAVORABLE**
From: Kathy Brohawn
Chair

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Maryland Aquaculture Coordinating Council (ACC) **SUPPORTS** House Bill (HB) 0857. HB 0857 would require the Department of Natural Resources, in consultation with the ACC, to establish harvest hours for areas specifically leased for shellfish aquaculture.

As shellfish aquaculture has grown in Maryland, so has the diversity of operations and practices. This includes operations that harvest year round, including the warmer summer months. Summer time harvests are subject to additional harvest control measures established in the National Shellfish Sanitation Program to decrease the risk of illness. These measures are designed to promote proper handling of shellfish during warmer months to maintain safe and wholesome products for consumers.

One consequence of these control measures is that, during certain months, harvesters are severely limited in the time allowed to work privately cultivated shellfish leases. In some cases this limit can be as little as four hours allowed for working a shellfish lease making efforts uneconomical for some.

Allowing the Department of Natural Resources to establish harvest times for shellfish aquaculture, in consultation with the ACC, would allow for consideration of the safety of harvesting as a driver of harvest times. The Maryland Departments of Health, Environment, and Natural Resources administrate the National Shellfish Sanitation Program for the State and all have representatives appointed to the ACC.

The Maryland Aquaculture Coordinating Council urges the Committee’s FAVORABLE report on HB 0857.

For more information, please contact Brian Callam, Ph.D., Director of Aquaculture and Industry Enhancement Division, Department of Natural Resources, at Brian.Callam@maryland.gov.

HB0857_DNR_SUP_ENT_2-23-24.pdf

Uploaded by: Brian Callum

Position: FAV



Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Josh Kurtz, Secretary
David Goshorn, Deputy Secretary

February 23, 2024

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 857 – First Reader

SHORT TITLE: Shellfish Aquaculture – Harvest Hours

DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: SUPPORT

EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION

The agency supports House Bill 857. The agency currently regulates harvest times under existing authority through the Oyster Fishery Management Plan and Natural Resources Article, Sec. 4-11A-12, to regulate activities on shellfish leases. The agency works closely with the Aquaculture Coordinating Council normally for any regulatory changes, so this would follow current protocol for scoping of regulatory ideas.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

No similar bills have been proposed previously.

BILL EXPLANATION

The bill gives the Department authority to, in consultation with the Aquaculture Coordinating Council, establish by regulation hours for harvesting within shellfish leases.

Contact: Dylan Behler, Director, Legislative and Constituent Services
dylan.behler@maryland.gov ♦ 410-260-8113 (office) ♦ 443-924-0891 (cell)

Testimony of Delegate Dana Jones - HB 857.pdf

Uploaded by: Dana Jones

Position: FAV

DANA JONES
Legislative District 30A
Anne Arundel County

Appropriations Committee

Subcommittees

Vice Chair, Health and Social Services

Oversight Committee on Pensions

Joint Committee on Administrative,
Executive, and Legislative Review

Vice Chair, Anne Arundel
County Delegation



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 161
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3211 · 301-858-3211
800-492-7122 Ext. 3211
Dana.Jones@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Delegate Dana Jones
Before the Environment and Transportation Committee
In Support of HB 857
Shellfish Aquaculture - Harvest Hours
February 23st, 2024

Chair Korman, Vice-Chair Boyce, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

I come before you today to introduce HB 857, Shellfish Aquaculture - Harvest Hours. A simple bill, that will give the Department of Natural Resources and the Aquaculture Coordinating Council, the flexibility to set harvest times that are best for Maryland's privately cultivated shellfish aquaculturists.

In May of last year, I was appointed by Speaker Adrienne Jones as the House member of the Aquaculture Coordinating Council. The basic charge of the Council is to advance Maryland's Aquaculture industry throughout Maryland. As part of this work, the Council establishes a number of workgroups to address possible solutions to issues faced by aquaculturists. HB 857 is a result of the outcome of the Summer Harvest Workgroup in the Aquaculture Coordinating Council.

The issue discussed in this workgroup was the truncated harvest times in the summer. As the industry has grown, year round harvesting operations have become common. However during the summer, because of the heat and to control illness, the harvest is subject to additional constraints from the National Shellfish Sanitation Program. A consequence of these controls are shortened harvest windows in the summer months, limiting the economic viability of privately cultivated shellfish leases during this time. In certain periods, there can be less than 4 hours allotted to leaseholders to harvest. HB 857 will allow the Department of Natural Resources, in consultation with the ACC, the regulatory flexibility to address this issue. As you will see in your floor system, this bill has received a letter of support from the Aquaculture Coordinating Council. Importantly, as outlined in the supporting testimony from the ACC, the Maryland

Department of Health, Environment, and Natural Resources administrate the National Shellfish Sanitation Program for the State and all have representatives appointed to the ACC.

With that, I humbly request a favorable report on HB 857.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dana Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Delegate Dana Jones