



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

March 4, 2025

BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 837 – First Reader

SHORT TITLE: Oyster Restoration – Use of Federal Funds – Prohibition

DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: OPPOSE

EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION

The Department opposes Senate Bill 837. The agency uses federal funding for a variety of activities ranging from \$800,000 on larvae production at the Horn Point Laboratory to \$10 million on restoration projects in areas like Hoopers Strait.

The bill would put in jeopardy those grants as those funds have already been approved and the agency is proceeding. This would impact all sanctuary projects, as well as some oyster industry projects and some aquaculture businesses due to a severe decline in larvae production and spat production. This would impact all sanctuary projects, as well as some oyster industry projects and some aquaculture efforts due to a severe decline in larvae production and spat production.

Federal funding is a critical part of combating the decrease in oyster populations. Without the ability to receive funds, many of the critical functions related to oyster production, restoration, and aquaculture could be negatively impacted.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

None.

BILL EXPLANATION

The bill would prevent the Department from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2030 from receiving federal funds for restoration in sanctuaries, except for those listed under Natural Resources Article, Section 4-1014.

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