



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

February 12, 2025

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 397 – First Reader

SHORT TITLE: Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation - Oyster Shucking House Loan Program

DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: SUPPORT

EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION

The Department supports House Bill 397. By lowering the number of years from five to three for the length of time a person must be licensed as a seafood dealer to be eligible for a loan, the loans will be available to more seafood dealers. Having to hold the license for at least three years is still an adequate amount of time to show an individual has been an active seafood dealer.

Additionally, the bill would allow for loans up to \$250,000, not to exceed \$25,000 for each full-time job or seasonal full-time job that is projected to be created or retained. The law currently only allows up to \$10,00 for each seasonal full-time job. Seasonal full-time jobs are commonly used by the oyster shucking house industry and treating seasonal and non-seasonal full-time jobs the same provides a more fair assessment of employment activity in this industry.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

None.

BILL EXPLANATION

The bill makes changes to the Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation including removing the loan limit based on seasonal full-time jobs and reducing the number of years a person must be a licensed seafood dealer in order to be eligible for a loan.

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