

Chester River Association \* Maryland Conservation Council  
\* Maryland League of Conservation Voters \* Sierra Club-  
Maryland Chapter \* South River Federation\*

March 12, 2010

House Environmental Matters Committee  
Room 251 House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD, 21401

**RE: Support HB 1191, “Oyster Poaching”**

Dear Chairman McIntosh and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland League of Conservation Voters, Sierra Club Maryland Chapter, South River Federation Chester River Association, and Maryland Conservation Council are pleased to join with other conservation groups in urging your support of House Bill 1191, “Oyster Poaching.”

HB 1191 is a terrific complement to Governor O’Malley’s Oyster Plan and would further protect both the oysters and the oystermen. Ninety-nine percent of Maryland’s oystermen have lost their jobs because of water pollution and over harvesting. This bill ensures that the remaining one percent of oysterman will not lose their jobs because of the bad behavior of a few oystermen. HB 1191 would revoke a license from a person who is cited for unlawfully catching oysters.

In order to preserve the stock of oysters available for future generations of watermen proper regulation needs to exist as well as consequences for the breach of regulations. Oysters and the industry that surrounds them are important to Maryland’s economy and the health of its environment.

We wish to thank Madam Chair for her leadership, the committee for its consideration, and respectfully request a favorable report.