

its individual members, figure so prominently in our broad plans for the expansion of our fisheries industry.

Your State government of course can and will continue to assist you in this effort—through the Department of Tidewater Fisheries, the Department of Economic Development, the Natural Resources Institute of the University of Maryland and other agencies. And I believe you all know that you will continue to receive the support of the Chief Executive in your efforts.

Let me give you an example of the kind of cooperation in this area that I have in mind. Because of the heavy yield, Maryland finds itself today producing more soft-shell clams that it can market successfully.

*Under these circumstances*, State agencies are collaborating in the development of a marketing study and program. An application has been made to the federal government's Area Redevelopment Administration for funds to finance the program. If approved, it will provide \$338,000 for the study and development of markets for this Tidewater resource. We have not yet received ARA approval of the project, but from reports I have been receiving from Washington I believe we have reason to feel optimistic about the outcome. In any event, I know we must increase our effort to find markets for our seafood products.

As the Governor of this State, I am proud of the steps you are taking to spark a renewed interest in this vital sector of the Maryland economy, and I promise you that your State government will continue to stand behind you in this commendable undertaking.