

THE PRESIDENT: Very well.

The last were really not formally offered. You may destroy your copies.

Amendment No. 3 is offered by Delegate Macdonald and seconded by the co-sponsors.

The Chair recognizes Delegate Macdonald.

DELEGATE MACDONALD: Mr. President, fellow delegates: This amendment would strike out from section 3.22, on page 6, lines 25 and 26, the phrase "pertaining to natural environment and resources".

As the section stands now, with those words in there, the General Assembly will be able to enact local laws on the subject of natural environment and resources. With the words out of there, with the words stricken, then the General Assembly could enact only statewide laws on that subject.

I think it is quite obvious that Maryland's greatest natural resource is the Chesapeake Bay. The Chesapeake Bay is the greatest natural oyster bed in America, and probably in the world.

In February of 1966, the Wye Institute, and that is spelled W-y-e, made a very interesting, complete report on the seafood industry in the State of Maryland. This report, ladies and gentlemen, is an eye opener.

The Wye Institute is a non-profit organization, chartered in the State of Maryland, sponsored by Eastern Shore leaders, and this report is endorsed by the Eastern Shore leaders who head up the Wye Institute.

The drop in oyster production in the State of Maryland, ladies and gentlemen, in the last eighty-five years has been shocking. In the last eighty-five years the drop in production of oysters has been nine per cent.

A primary cause of this drop and everything I am saying now is taken directly from this report of the Wye Institute, the primary cause of this drop has been the system of county by county laws which we have followed here in the State of Maryland on this subject.

Let me quote from page 5 of this report: "The county laws have strangled development. Restrictions of gear are in many cases deleterious. Seasonal laws have interfered with oyster quality. Yet the

communal aspects of the fisheries do not have to stand in the way of development, provided reasonable changes take place."

The report suggests several methods for rehabilitating the oyster industry and the seafood industry at large in the State of Maryland.

Every one of those suggestions which the report makes would require that the present archaic system of legislating on our natural resources county by county be done away with.

In brief, the abolition of this old system of county by county legislation is essential if we are to rehabilitate this industry, which I would say is No. 1 in the State of Maryland.

THE PRESIDENT: You have one minute, Delegate Macdonald.

DELEGATE MACDONALD: What do these county laws do? First and foremost, they prevent non-residents of county from taking anything from the county waters. If you want to take oysters from the waters of the county of Wicomico you must be a resident of Wicomico County, and that is true all the way down the line with every one of these counties.

Secondly, they restrict the methods of operation. They restrict the gear which may be used in harvesting the oysters.

Thirdly, they restrict harvesting seasons. In other words, these county by county laws are nothing but restrictions, restrictions and restrictions.

THE PRESIDENT: Your six minutes are up, Delegate Macdonald.

DELEGATE MACDONALD: Fellow delegates, I urge that you vote for this amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: Delegate Carson.

DELEGATE CARSON: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen: We live in a State which has been called America in miniature, and I think that phrase has much truth within it because we have in Worcester County a species of deer unknown to the rest of the State. We have in Garrett County a turkey population unknown to the rest of the State.

We have seafood species in southern Maryland in the waters of the Bay which are unknown to the upper Bay, and to the tributaries of the Bay, and we have some species of fish in the upper Bay which are