

Senate Bill No. 512—St. Mary's County; Seed Oysters

AN ACT to add new Sections 707(l) and 711(d) SECTION 707 (L) to Article 66C of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1957 Edition), title "Natural Resources", sub-title "Oysters and Clams", to follow, respectively, after Sections 707(k) and 711(c) IMMEDIATELY AFTER SECTION 707 (K) thereof, directing the Department of Tidewater Fisheries to close in rotation all natural oyster bars in each of several specific areas in St. Mary's County and to deposit thereon certain supplies of seed oysters; providing that certain seed oysters taken from the waters of St. Mary's County shall not be removed therefrom; imposing an inspection tax on oysters taken from certain waters of St. Mary's County and relating generally to the taking of seed oysters, the re-seeding of seed oysters and the taking of oysters in St. Mary's County. PROHIBITING REMOVAL OF SEED OYSTERS FROM THE WATERS OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY FOR SALE OR FOR ANY PRIVATE USE, PROVIDING FOR THE REDEPOSIT OF SEED OYSTERS TAKEN FROM WATERS IN THE COUNTY, AND PROVIDING THE PENALTY FOR VIOLATIONS.

April 29, 1959.

Honorable George W. Della
President of the Senate
State House
Annapolis, Maryland

Dear Mr. President:

As a result of much study and many discussions with members of my staff and others, I have arrived at the decision to veto Senate Bill No. 512. Article II, Section 17 of the State Constitution requires me to return all vetoed bills to the House of their origin. I am herewith returning this particular bill to the Senate of Maryland and am stating my objection to it and the reasons for the action that I have taken herein.

One of the major goals of my administration is to so organize the Department of Tidewater Fisheries that it can develop and carry out an effective program to rehabilitate the oyster resources of the Chesapeake Bay and its Tributaries. With oyster production approaching an all time low, while general prosperity and demand for the product is at its peak, this problem is one which concerns every Marylander.

The State's program for shelling and seeding the public rocks is properly financed. With sound management and supervision, there is every reason to expect a decided trend upward in the next several years. Since nature takes about three to four years to grow a mature oyster, we cannot expect spectacular immediate results. Plans must be made on a long term basis, so that our tongers, dredgers, packers, growers, shuckers, and all others connected with the industry can look forward to increasing prosperity.

The production of seed oysters for planting on the beds is the fundamental basis for any program. This is true, whether we consider the public bars or private grounds. The State must develop as soon as possible seed beds to be used to reseed the depleted public bars. Such a need can and will be met through the oyster rehabilitation fund.