

*Resolved*, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to The Honorable Marvin Mandel, Governor of Maryland.

Approved April 22, 1970.

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No. 19

(House Joint Resolution 83)

House Joint Resolution commending the Board of Public Works for their careful consideration of matters related to environmental control and urging the Board to ban any further disposal of dredged spoil material off Kent Island and to review existing studies and commission new studies of the effects of overboard dumping of dredged spoil.

The conservation of the Chesapeake Bay, Maryland's greatest natural resource, is one of the most important problems facing the State at this time. Moreover, effective control and abatement of the polluting and destruction of all the waterways of the State is a matter of vital concern to the State. As the Governor so aptly pointed out in his address to the General Assembly on February 13: "Our environment is as much a part of our heritage as our culture. We must nurture it, and protect it, so that it can be passed on to future generations. The commitment of the people of Maryland to the cause of environmental quality is a commitment to the quality of life itself."

Since, in recent times, the consciousness of the citizens of this great Nation has been awakened to the growing threat of environmental pollution, the representatives of those people must accept the challenge and responsibility of providing for their needs. We in Maryland have long been forerunners in the fight to check environmental pollution, but we must and cannot afford the luxury of resting on our laurels.

In this regard, the Board of Public Works is to be highly commended for the careful study and consideration that it gives to projects which may in some manner affect our natural resources and environment. Their actions are indicative of a deep sense of responsibility to the preservation of Maryland's natural heritages.

It is just such careful consideration which has gone into the proposed dumping of dredged spoil material from the Baltimore Harbor Channel off Kent Island. Studies have concluded that any further dumping in that area would: (1) definitely destroy one of the most important winter drift net fisheries areas in the entire Bay; (2) probably result in significant decreases in productivity of the adjacent oyster bars along the Kent Island shore at a time when the piece by piece destruction of the most productive beds would tend to reverse what is now a strengthening trend in oyster production; (3) present the problem of potential pollutants from the presence of high concentrations of ether-soluble substances and of heavy metals in the bottom sediments of Baltimore Harbor; and (4) cause siltation and changes in circulation patterns around the dumping area. Recommendations have also been made to the Commission on Submerged Lands by its own ad hoc committee that the Kent Island disposal area be used only as a last resort. Moreover, the preferred dumping area of the committee was spoil containment areas in and around Baltimore Harbor which, reports indicate, have a capacity twice that needed to hold the expected materials dredged from the Channel.

The General Assembly has, itself, given approval to creating spoil containment areas by enacting Chapter 468, Acts of 1969, which au-