

WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER, Governor

certain ~~committee~~ committees by a certain date.

WHEREAS, Since 1954, the Department of Natural Resources has been taking samples of fish for the presence of juvenile rockfish in the Chesapeake Bay, and has used these samples as a basis for the "Young of the Year Index"; and

WHEREAS, The Maryland "Young of the Year Index" is the most widely used index to analyze the status of the abundance of rockfish or striped bass along the Atlantic Coast, and has also been used for various management decisions, including imposing and removing the current moratoriums on the taking, possession, transportation, and sale of rockfish in Maryland; and

WHEREAS, It has been stated, however, that the sampling methods used in the "Young of the Year Index" are ~~too simplistic, too random, and not scientific enough~~ insufficient to be used as ~~a~~ the sole gauge to determine when to remove the ~~moratoriums~~ current restrictions on the taking, possession, transportation, and sale of rockfish; and

WHEREAS, The Department uses 22 key sites for sampling (which have remained the same since 1954 and are the basis for the "Young of the Year Index") along with as many as 18 alternate sites for sampling (which are randomly selected each year by watermen but are not used as part of the "Young of the Year Index"); and

WHEREAS, Many areas of the Chesapeake Bay do not lend themselves to the current sampling methods since many areas are too shallow or are blocked by tree stumps and other obstacles that can tangle or snag sampling nets; and

WHEREAS, ~~More~~ The best available modern and scientific procedures should be used in conjunction with the current sampling methods for the "Young of the Year Index" so that the data produced by all of these procedures and methods could ~~approach~~ provide more accurate and statistically significant figures; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Secretary of Natural Resources is requested to ~~use more modern and scientific procedures~~ examine all available sampling methods and associated costs of implementing additional sampling methods to supplement the current sampling methods for the "Young of the Year Index" for juvenile rockfish to obtain ~~less random and more~~ the best available statistically significant figures that can be used as a gauge to remove the current ~~moratoriums~~ restrictions on the taking, possession, transportation, and sale of rockfish; and be it further

RESOLVED, That on or before December 1, 1989, the Secretary of Natural Resources is requested to report to the members of the House Environmental Matters Committee and the Senate Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee on the desirability and feasibility of implementing additional sampling techniques and on the effectiveness of any changes made to the current sampling procedures used to determine the "Young of the Year Index" for juvenile rockfish; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of Legislative Reference to the Honorable Torrey C. Brown, M.D., Secretary of Natural Resources, Tawes State Office Building, 580 Taylor Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21401.

Signed May 19, 1989.