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**RECREATIONAL ANGLERS
WORKING TO CONSERVE, PROMOTE, AND ENHANCE MARYLAND'S
MARINE RESOURCES**

February 13, 2019

To: Honorable Kumar P. Barve, Chairman
Honorable Dana Stein, Vice Chairman
Honorable Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee

Re: **House Bill 384** Soft-Shell Clams and Razor Clams - Fishery Management Plans

CCA Maryland Position: Support

As recreational anglers, CCA Maryland supports the sound science-based management of the natural resources to support our activities, and the positive economic impacts that recreational fishing and boating provide to the region.

We have long standing concerns about wide swings in abundance, and the lack of science based information in use to manage our clam resources. Clams are a valuable food and bait product for human use, but also provide certain ecosystem services including water filtration, and food or forage for many important fish species that anglers pursue.

We believe that if Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) developed a science-based fisheries management plan (FMP) it would result in more balanced populations, sustainable fisheries, and aide in recognizing the overall value that the clam resources provide to the natural system and all users who benefit from the resource.

We hope that DNR would initiate an FMP development process, and set goals and seek more management tools to promote a positive trend in population, and an opportunity for managers and users to better understand the very nature of the clam species.

While we recognize the many variables that impact the overall management of our shared natural resources, we believe that shellfish experts at DNR should lead efforts and work towards managing our important clam resources for the overall long term benefit given both their direct and indirect economic and ecological value.

For these reasons, we respectfully request a favorable vote on HB 384.