

OFFICERS

Frank Bonanno, *Chairman*
Michael Wissel, *Vice-Chairman*
Chair, Management Committee
Larry Jennings, *Secretary*
Frank Bonnano, *Treasurer*
David Sikorski,
Executive Director



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

February 20th, 2019

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

Re: House Bill 410 - Task Force on Prohibiting Debris From entering Storm Drains or Storm water Inlets
CCA Maryland Position: Support

Coastal Conservation Association Maryland (CCAMD) is a state chapter of Coastal Conservation Association, a national nonprofit and the nation's largest organization of saltwater anglers. We are committed to supporting sensible, science-based management practices in support of sustainable fisheries.

Increasingly advocating for sustainable fisheries is no longer limited to concerns about the size of fish populations, reproductive capacity and limits to fish harvest. We must vigorously support protecting and restoring fish habitat both in spawning areas and in the Chesapeake Bay in general. That challenge is the basis for our strong support for oyster sanctuaries and oyster reef restoration.

This legislation deals with a significant but less obvious threat to fish, oysters and all marine life in the bay, plastic pollution. The gross impact of discarded plastic materials along our streams and later floating in our rivers is obvious. What has received little public attention are the far-reaching effects of plastic degradation into very small particles, micro and nanoparticles. These particles are small enough to be eaten by zooplankton and phytoplankton on which small fish and shellfish feed. Plastic nanoparticles have been found in the brains of fish and have been thought to change behavior and affect survival. Laboratory studies have demonstrated that oysters exposed to polystyrene microspheres will ingest them and result in feeding modifications and reproductive disruption such as decreased number of eggs and decreased sperm motility.

In addition to the direct effects of small plastic particles on marine organisms, they have toxic effects on the organism's metabolism and organ functions because of the toxic chemicals such as PCBs that are bound to them.

Stopping plastic pollution from reaching our waterways is critical to protecting our marine ecosystem.

For these reasons, we respectfully request a favorable vote on HB 410