

[First Reprint]

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION No. 19

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 26, 1996

By Senator CARDINALE

1 A **JOINT RESOLUTION** establishing a task force to study the  
2 revitalization of the oyster industry.

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4 **WHEREAS**, The culture of oysters in New Jersey estuarine areas is the  
5 oldest type of aquaculture practiced in the State; and

6 **WHEREAS**, This practice gave rise to a very significant industry for  
7 more than one hundred years; however, in the last forty years the  
8 production of oysters has steadily declined to an average value of  
9 less than ten percent of the levels previously achieved; and

10 **WHEREAS**, This decline is attributable to a complex set of factors,  
11 many of which are beyond the control of the practitioners of this  
12 type of culture; and

13 **WHEREAS**, There is ample evidence that the biological potential for  
14 oyster production, especially in the Delaware bay, remains high; and

15 **WHEREAS**, The persons involved in the shellfish industry clearly  
16 recognize the need for the introduction of innovative changes in  
17 culture practices in order to again realize this potential; and

18 **WHEREAS**, Such innovation, including commercial scale trials of new  
19 operational strategies, is seriously impeded by the current  
20 antiquated statutory and regulatory structure controlling the use of  
21 this natural resource; and

22 **WHEREAS**, Reformulation of the regulatory structure is urgently  
23 needed to permit the technological updating of oyster culture  
24 practices that will permit the circumvention of the current adverse  
25 conditions and foster the revitalization of the New Jersey oyster  
26 industry; now, therefore,

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28 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State  
29 of New Jersey:

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31 1. There is established a task force to be known as the "Oyster

**EXPLANATION** - Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

<sup>1</sup> Senate SSV committee amendments adopted March 7, 1996.

1 Industry Revitalization Task Force." The task force shall consist of 13  
2 members each having expertise in oyster culture to be appointed by the  
3 Governor as follows: two representatives from the Department of  
4 Environmental Protection, two representatives from the Department  
5 of Agriculture, one representative from the Delaware Bay Section of  
6 the Shell Fisheries Council, three representatives from the Haskin  
7 Shellfish Research Laboratory, three representatives from the oyster  
8 industry <sup>1</sup>,including at least one member from the New Jersey Oyster  
9 Planters and Packers Association<sup>1</sup>, the marine science representative  
10 of the Statewide Advisory Committee of the New Jersey Agricultural  
11 Experiment Station Board of Managers, and one member from the  
12 New Jersey Aquaculture Association. Appointments to the task force  
13 shall be made within 60 days of the effective date of this joint  
14 resolution.

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16 2. It shall be the duty of the task force to examine the status of  
17 oyster culture as currently practiced in New Jersey. The task force  
18 shall evaluate the technological, sociological and regulatory aspects of  
19 the harvesting and culture of oysters in the Delaware bay and adjacent  
20 waters. The task force shall define the problems confronting the  
21 oyster industry, including the causes for its reduced production and  
22 diminished economic return, examine feasible alternative strategies  
23 that might be utilized in reversing the negative trend in the industry,  
24 and provide a comprehensive plan of action for revitalization of the  
25 industry, including recommendations for actions to be taken by the  
26 Legislature and the Governor to address the technical, regulatory, and  
27 legal problems impeding the proper utilization of this valuable natural  
28 resource. The task force shall present a final report of its findings and  
29 recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature no later than  
30 180 days following the appointment of the members of the task force.  
31 The task force shall dissolve upon the issuance of its final report.

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33 3. The members of the task force shall serve without  
34 compensation.

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36 4. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately and shall  
37 expire upon the submission of the report required pursuant to section  
38 2 of this act.

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43 Establishes "Oyster Industry Revitalization Task Force."