



2025-2026 General Assembly

# SENATE BILL 401: NC Farm Act of 2025-2026, Sec. 7: Require a Statewide Study on Shellfish Aquaculture Leasing and Current Moratorium on Shellfish Leasing

**Analysis of:** S.L. 2026-11, Sec. 7

**Date:** August 19, 2026

**Prepared by:** Legislative Analysis  
Division Staff

Section 7 of S.L. 2026-11 (Senate Bill 401), as amended by Section 3.18 of S.L. 2026-61 (House Bill 268), directs the North Carolina Collaboratory to study shellfish aquaculture regulations to ensure a balanced approach between economic development, environmental protection, and public access to coastal waters. In conducting the study, the Collaboratory must consult with the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries, the Marine Fisheries Commission, and other stakeholders, including shellfish growers, commercial and recreational fishermen, property owners, and coastal area local governments.

An interim report is due to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources by December 1, 2026, and a final report, including any recommendations for legislative or regulatory changes, is due by December 1, 2027.

Section 7 of S.L. 2026-11 section became effective June 22, 2026. Section 3.18 of S.L. 2026-61 became effective August 11, 2026.

Kara McCraw  
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