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Monday, June 17, 2019

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Rep. Hunter to Host Oyster Aquaculture Summit

(CORPUS CHRISTI, TX) – State Rep. Todd Hunter will host legislators, scholars, restaurant owners and state officials at a July 10 summit focused on Texas oyster aquaculture and a new law that will generate significant economic activity across Texas.

Rep. Hunter will host the *Texas Oyster Aquaculture Summit: A New Industry for Texas* on July 10 at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. The event will feature a series of panel discussions on the emerging oyster market in Texas. The conference comes as the state prepares to implement House Bill 1300, legislation that Rep. Hunter authored and Governor Greg Abbott signed into law last month. The new law will provide a major economic and cultural boost along the Texas coast by allowing oyster mariculture in Texas.

HB 1300 requires the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission to adopt rules establishing a program governing the process of growing cultivated oysters. Texas has been the only coastal state in the country that does not engage in cultivated oyster mariculture.

Currently, Texas restaurants must import farm-grown half-shell oysters from other states. House Bill 1300 will provide a new local source for oysters that are increasingly in demand. The new program will also have significant environmental benefits by reducing harvest pressure on wild oyster reefs.

“This summit will bring together many of the people who worked to pass House Bill 1300 and who have a unique perspective on the economic opportunity that is about to hit our state,” said Rep. Hunter, R-Corpus Christi. “This is a great opportunity to hear about this emerging industry from a variety of perspectives — economic, regulatory, scientific and cultural. The arrival of oyster mariculture in Texas will bring sweeping benefits across our state and especially along the coast. Anyone who wants a full-picture view of the Texas oyster market should consider attending.”

The daylong summit will be free and open to the public. Speakers will include legislators, academics, officials from the Parks and Wildlife Department, restaurant owners and others with expertise in oyster aquaculture.

One of the featured guests will be Texas House Speaker Dennis Bonnen.

“I am looking forward to participating in this year's oyster aquaculture summit and to sharing with stakeholders the significant legislative accomplishments that passed as a result of Representative Hunter's leadership,” Speaker Bonnen said. “The Texas House took meaningful action to include Texas in the growing oyster farming industry, which will usher in a new era of environmental and economic growth along the gulf coast. I want to thank Representative Hunter for leading the way on this issue, and for the invitation to address this year's summit.”



For more information or to register for the summit, go to <https://growtxoysterconference.eventbrite.com/>.

“We are on the cusp of something that is going to be good for our economy and great for our way of life along the coast,” Rep. Hunter said. “I am grateful that so many experts have agreed to take part in this summit and put a spotlight on how the emerging, expanding Texas oyster industry is going to impact communities in Texas and beyond.”

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About Rep. Todd Hunter

Todd Hunter is the state representative for Texas House District 32 in Nueces County, TX. He is a member of the Criminal Jurisprudence Committee, which addresses important issues pertaining to criminal law, as well as a member of the State Affairs Committee, which deals with significant matters of state policy, ranging from the administration of the state government to cybersecurity.