At a hearing in the House on the companion to this bill, an objection to the provision of the bill relating to sand mining was raised on the grounds that the sand mining would result in a significant risk of ciguatera poisoning due to the consumption of fish taken from the vicinity of the mining operation. The supposition that this risk is significant was based on an observed correlation between previous harbor dredging operations and incidents of the poisoning. We note, however, that these incidents have involved dredging of bottom materials other than sand.

There are natural movements of sand annually that vastly exceed the disturbances that would result from the sand mining operations. If the sand mining operations involved a significant risk of ciguatera poisoning, a strong correlation should exist between incidents of the poisoning and the natural movements of sand. So far as we know, no such correlation has been found. Hence we believe that there is no significant risk of ciguatera poisoning as a result of the sand mining whose permission would be allowed by SB 1310.