

**Pramer Oyster Co., Inc.**  
**35 Harbor Avenue**  
**Norwalk, CT 06850**  
**(203) 984-3243**

February 18, 2009

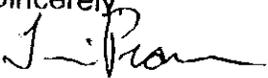
Re: Bill #6371 Section 72. One dollar fee per bushel of clams or oysters

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a third generation shell fisherman. I own several properties in Fairfield County and pay more than my fair share of property tax, income tax and sales tax. I think the fee per bushel is inconsistent with the DEP fees and will create additional problems.

- 1) In what other industry do you charge a fee per item on something that is brought to market? Do you charge apples or oranges per pound? Meat per pound? Lobster per pound? Do you charge sewage plants by the gallon? If not, then why would you charge oysters or clams a fee by the bushel?
  - 2) Additional costs will put some companies out of business. These companies are paying Connecticut taxes and Federal taxes and employing people who would otherwise be out of work in Connecticut. Do we need any additional people collecting unemployment benefits when they could be working?
  - 3) Harvesting a finished product is not as easy as it sounds. It takes an oyster 3-5 years to reach market size. There are costs that are incurred every year for this. There is no income received at this time; there is only money spent. There is money for payroll, insurance, fuel, dockage, training, supplies, taxes, leases, fees, shipping and equipment. We are supporting our economy.
  - 4) The oysters and clams face major risk from weather, pollution (i.e., sewer plant and over development), disease and predators. Adding additional costs onto the costs of keeping the clams and oysters alive will make it tough it to compete in the world and local markets.
- I feel the industry serves the community in a very positive way. We provide jobs and give back to the community by supporting environmental groups and educating people about one of Connecticut's most valuable assets of Long Island Sound and oysters and clams.
- Why should the shell fishing industry bear the burden of this tax? Are you taxing other industries as well? Connecticut historically has been known as a great grower of shellfish—let's try and keep it that way. Take a look at this unfair tax. Please let me know you thoughts on this.

Sincerely,



Tim Pramer