



FISHERIES ADVISORY COUNCIL - A group of dedicated citizens from all regions of the state working together for fish and fishing in Connecticut.

March 16, 2009

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Testimony of Dr. Vincent P. Ringrose, Chairman, FISHERIES ADVISORY COUNCIL.

Re: ***RAISED BILL HB6375***

Senator Slossberg, Representative Spallone, and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee:

The Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC) represents 31 organizations working together on behalf of fish and fishing in the State of Connecticut. The FAC also serves as an advisory council to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). We would like to address two issues included in HB6375.

The first issue is the termination of the Connecticut Delegation to the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Commission, effective October 1, 2009. The Delegation is one part of a larger whole – the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Compact - created by the state legislatures of Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont and New Hampshire, and with the consent of the United States Congress. The Commission is charged with, among other things, the power to affect stocking programs, management procedures and research in each member state, and to promulgate regulations governing Atlantic salmon fishing in the mainstem of the Connecticut River. It is essential the state of Connecticut play an integral role these decisions by continued participation in the Commission. Our greatest concern, however, is the potential loss of the wonderful salmon in the schools program, 5,500 students strong, sponsored by the Connecticut River Salmon Association with the assistance of DEP. These salmon eggs are provided to the program from the federal hatchery in Vermont, operated specifically for the CRASC program.

The second issue is the elimination of the Invasive Plant Council. The council has begun a necessary program to eliminate the non-native plants that have begun to choke our waterways and ponds. Homegrown recreation is going to be more important than ever in this economic climate, and our fishing and boating opportunities must be maintained.

Thank you.