



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

March 15, 2010

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

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

Re: *RAISED BILL S.B. No. 386 & S.B. No. 0383*

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, and members of the Environmental Committee:

I wish to testify on the behalf of the Fisheries Advisory Council of the DEP concerning proposed S.B. No. 386.

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 DEP.

The FAC at its regular meeting on 3/11. Unanimously authorized me to urge your committee, to reject raised Bills SB 386 and SB 383 in their entirety.

These bills are a thinly veiled attempt to legislate around the legislatively mandated stream flow regulations which are nearing fruition. The opponents of stream flow regulations, especially the Department of Public Health, are hoping to have the ability to sabotage, stop, and finalize veto the regulations at the end of the TRI-PHASIC SIXTEEN year process. This process involves separate individualized regulation packages for each of the seven designated watersheds, with more checkpoints than an Afghanistan roadway. If the process began today, the first package would not be completed until 2026.

The first stream flow Bill was passed in 1971, which will make the total time span for comprehensive regulation 55 years. Five men wrote and promoted the original bill; two physicians, one dentist and two attorneys. I am the only one still living. Of our four legislative sponsors, only the incomparable Senator George "Doc" Gunther is still alive in retirement.

The Department of Public Health has been implacably hostile to the stream flow process since 1971. They believe that they alone are capable of protecting the water supply for the citizens of our State. So they insist on veto power in this process.

In the 1971 public hearing DPH commissioner Dr. Franklin Foote condemned the bill as a potential horror. His caustic language, a mixture of indignation and dismay will never be forgotten by those that heard it. Sadly, the testimony submitted by DPH at the recent public hearing on the proposed regulation could have been written by Dr. Foote himself!

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee, do not be deceived by these bills. Reject them, and let the process proceed. The proposed regs are loaded with safety features, and were put forth only after nearly two years of work by three separate committees.

We remain available for additional comment and discussion at your request.

Thank you for listening to this testimony.