

**Testimony in support of Raised S.B. No. 388,  
AAC Connecticut's Economic and Environmental Future**

Before the Environment Committee  
March 12, 2010

Dear Chairman Meyer, Chairman Roy, and members of the Environment Committee,

I, Frederic Fischer, a member of the Groton Open Space Association, write in support of Raised S.B. 388, An Act Concerning Connecticut's Economic and Environmental Future. Economic activity related to Long Island Sound contributes \$8 billion annually to the regional economy. Investing in the Sound's water quality and in coastal habitats will bring huge returns to the state in jobs created, healthy fisheries and shellfish beds, increased tourism, and environmental gains. This bill will increase bonding for the state Clean Water Fund. Benefits include:

*Job creation:* Rebuilding and enhancing wastewater treatment facilities are among the state's most productive job-creation investments. Between 10 and 100 direct and indirect jobs are created for every \$1 million spent.

*Improved water quality:* Eliminating raw sewage outflows and chemical runoff will 1) grow local businesses' access to sustainable fisheries and open prime shellfish beds and 2) promote healthy tourism by maintaining open beaches.

*Protecting human health and property:* Updated stormwater systems reduce the risk of flooding and sewage back-ups in homes and streets.

*Saving money in the long run:* Inadequate wastewater treatment plants and stormwater systems must be replaced eventually to comply with the law. Construction costs will only go up, so delaying will unnecessarily burden municipalities and citizens; it is more cost-effective to do the work now.

This bill will also:

*Establish a new Habitat Restoration sub-account* within the Long Island Sound Fund, and provide for funding the Habitat account through renewal fees on special license plates, like the Long Island Sound and Wildlife plates. This is a smart way to raise money--it costs the state virtually nothing and allows citizens to voluntarily support projects they care about.

*Provide additional tools to stormwater authority pilot programs* that will allow them to develop and fund stormwater pollution reduction projects necessary to protect the health of citizens and Long Island Sound.

I urge the members of the Environment Committee to support Raised S.B. 388.

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