

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

Before the Environment Committee  
March 12, 2010

S.B. 388 increases investment in the state's Clean Water Fund, which helps municipalities pay for improvements to stormwater and sewage systems--a strategy that creates construction jobs, protects human health, and keeps beaches and shellfish beds open. It also establishes a new Habitat Restoration sub-account in the special Long Island Sound Fund, which will allow Connecticut citizens to support habitat restoration projects by purchasing LIS or Habitat license plates.

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

I, Robert E. Marra, of West Haven, Connecticut, write in support of Raised S.B. 388, An Act Concerning Connecticut's Economic and Environmental Future.

Long Island Sound is responsible for \$8 billion of activity annually, all of it going to our regional economy. That's an important component of what keeps people employed here. The importance of Long Island Sound argues strongly for the absolute imperative that we maintain and indeed improve the Sound's water quality and the quality of the coastal habitat that itself sustains the productivity of the Sound, and ensures its role in providing **healthy fisheries, shellfish beds, clean water** and an attractive destination for **tourism**.

By rebuilding and enhancing wastewater treatment facilities, S.B. 388 plays an important role in **job creation**. These are local jobs working towards the elimination of raw sewage outflows and chemical runoff that continue to plague the Sound, and which **MUST** be addressed in any case. By addressing these exigencies (while creating jobs -- a win-win!) local businesses benefit through the addition of truly sustainable fisheries and the improvement of prime shellfish beds. And with the Sound a once-again desirable place for beachside recreation, local tourism benefits, as well.

Furthermore, S.B. 388 addresses the need to **update stormwater systems**, thereby reducing the risk of flooding and sewage back-ups in homes and streets. This is obviously important in protecting human health and property. We now have woefully inadequate wastewater treatment plants and stormwater systems, and one way or another these will need to be updated and repaired in order to comply with the law. Since construction costs will only go up, delaying on these necessary infrastructure improvements will unnecessarily burden municipalities and citizens; it is more cost-effective to do the work now.

Some additional benefits of S.B. 388 include the establishment of a new Habitat Restoration sub-account within the Long Island Sound Fund, money raised through specialty license plate renewal fees. This costs the state virtually nothing and yet is an excellent way to keep stakeholders feeling that they are a part of the solution -- or perhaps just that they see that their neighbors and coworkers are. Island Sound.

For all these reasons, I urge the members of the Environment Committee to support Raised S.B. 388.