



State of Connecticut
SENATE

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March 17, 2014

Dear Senator Meyer, Representative Gentile and distinguished members of the Environment Committee,

I am State Senator Michael McLachlan, and I am here today to testify in support of Senate Bill 446, *An Act Establishing an Aquatic Invasive Species Management Grant and Prevention and Education Program*.

I support legislation that would establish a program that provides grants to municipalities for aquatic invasive species management efforts in lakes, because invasive species have a negative impact on our state's lakes.

In the Greater Danbury Community, Candlewood Lake provides year around recreational usage. Tourists come to enjoy the many opportunities the lake provides for them. This includes swimming, fishing, and boating. Candlewood Lake is important to the economic stability in the region. The lake, like so many other bodies of water in the state, is experiencing issues with invasive species.

Candlewood Lake's pH level would make it prime host for zebra mussels. These invasive mollusks can spread rapidly throughout a body of water, and they can change the ecosystem of the lake they invade forever. They do not just affect the ecosystem; they can attach themselves to boat hulls, clog water intakes on engines, and do other damage to personal property. It is critical for zebra mussels to not get established in a body of water; because once they are there it is almost impossible to eliminate them.

Candlewood Lake is also home to three invasive plants. These plants, Eurasian Watermilfoil, Curly Leaf Pondweed, and Brittle Waternymph are a nuisance to the lake. Eurasian Watermilfoil, for example, cuts off sunlight to other plants located beneath the surface of the water. This means that it can destroy the native aquatic plants in the lake.

Preventing the spread of invasive species in our state's bodies of water is an issue that needs to be addressed. We must be able to prevent invasive species from entering our bodies of water, and if there are already invasive species there, we must be able to effectively control the spread of them.

I urge the committee to support this legislation.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Michael A. McLachlan
State Senator - 24th District