

Appropriations Committee

March 2, 2015

Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Budget Public Hearing

Senator Bye, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee;

My name is Michael Beauchene, I work for the State of Connecticut as a Supervising Fisheries Biologist within the Inland Fisheries Division, and I am submitting written testimony today as a proud member of CSEA SEIU Local 2001, an avid outdoors person, and life-long resident of Connecticut.

Fishing means many things to many people. Fishing is a popular activity in Connecticut. Anglers augment Connecticut's economy with 436 million dollars spent on; trip-related expenses, equipment, and fishing licenses.¹ This revenue is generated by 342,000 people who fished a total of 4.7 million days, equaling 14.7 days per angler. The Connecticut Aquatic Resources Education (CARE) program, which I oversee, has contact with over 10,000 youth and their families each year, many of which become lifetime anglers and conservationists, contributing to the state's economy by purchasing fishing equipment and fishing licenses.²

As people who participate in fishing are spending money supporting the economy at the state and local level, reduction in funding, like closing facilities, not hiring seasonal employees, and reduction in the ability to enhance recreational fishing has an immediate impact to the state's economy through the loss licenses fees and sales/gas tax revenue. These reductions also have an unintended ripple effect expanding out to the other parts of our economy like the hotel and restaurant industry, charter fishing industry, and bait and tackle industry.

I would like to encourage the legislature to continue supporting the outdoor community by providing adequate funding in this and future state budgets. The return on the investment is a win- win situation for the economy, the public, and our natural resources.

Thank you,

Michael Beauchene
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¹ US Fish and Wildlife Service. 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. March 2013

² www.responsivemanagement.com/download/reports/R&R_Evaluation_Report.pdf