



TOWN OF GROTON

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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Senator Kennedy, Representative Albis, and members of the Environment Committee,

I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Town of Groton's Economic Development Commission in support House Bill 5720 "An Act Requiring the Department of Agriculture to Double the Capacity for Shellfish Sample Testing and to Establish a Site for Shellfish Sample Testing East of the Connecticut River."

The Town of Groton Economic Development Commission's goal is to foster business growth and to work to make it easier to conduct business in Groton. To this end, supporting the addition of a shellfish testing facility in eastern Connecticut is a logical move. Currently, samples must be transported to Milford, which is time consuming and a burden to the volunteer shellfish commissioners who currently bear the transportation responsibilities. Adding a testing site in the eastern part of the state will enable state facilities to test more samples and will lead to growth of commercial and recreational shellfishing in Groton.

While Groton has many shell fishing beds, the shellfishing beds are inaccessible for much of the season because of the inability to conduct appropriate testing. Additionally, there are commercial enterprises interested in utilizing shellfishing beds in Noank, but are unable to do so because challenges surrounding testing. A facility in eastern Connecticut, possibly at the University of Connecticut's Avery Point campus, would eliminate these issues and enable commercial shellfishing operations and volunteer commissions to more easily meet testing requirements of the Department of Agriculture.

On behalf of the Economic Development Commission, I ask you to support House Bill 5720 and support Eastern Connecticut's economic growth.

Sincerely yours,

Susan Dowling, Chair
Economic Development Commission
Town of Groton