



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
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REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAM TONG
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TESTIMONY OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAM TONG

HB 6047-- AN ACT PROVIDING PROPER FUNDING FOR STATE HATCHERIES.

Members of the Environment Committee:

Thank you for Raising HB 6047 for a public hearing. This bill provides a great opportunity for continued discussion and support for increased fishing opportunities in Connecticut's lakes, ponds, rivers and streams. Connecticut is renowned as one of the best – if not *the* best – place for fishing in the northeast. This is a reputation that we should continue to support and bolster through the careful analysis, planning and programming that is contemplated in HB 6047.

According to the state Commission on Culture and Tourism, 251,000 state residents take 5.4 million fishing trips in the state and spend \$198 million each year. In addition, 51,000 anglers from out of state take 457,000 fishing trips in Connecticut, spending about \$45 million annually. With over \$200 million in economic activity, it is imperative we preserve this vital part of our economy.

To this end, the bill establishes a Connecticut Fish Hatcheries and Recreational Fisheries account, which can receive private donations. It is my belief and my expectation that most Connecticut anglers will gladly contribute to this account if all of most of the money is specifically used to support our hatcheries and fishing programs. The bill also establishes a task force to ensure the long term sustainability of our hatcheries.

Fishing is a lifetime activity that can be enjoyed by everyone -- young & old; and fishing is certainly a key activity that makes Connecticut such a great place to live and such a great place for a vacation.

Thank you for your support of HB 6047.