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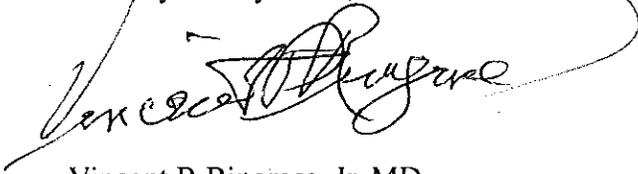
To Members of the Environment Committee

I speak today in favor of HB 6047 submitted by Representative Tong.

This bill is overdue. The OPM has proposed closing the Kensington hatchery, for financial savings, over several consecutive sessions. Closing the hatchery would, for example, result in cancelling the wonderful state-wide Salmon in Schools and Trout in the Classroom programs, involving nearly 200 schools and thousands of students. The eggs for both programs are picked up by volunteers at Kensington Hatchery.

I have been privileged to serve on the DEEP's Conservation Advisory Council for four decades, and the Fisheries Advisory Council for two decades, recently as Chairman. I have seen many fiscal crises come and go.

Thank you very much,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vincent P. Ringrose, Jr.", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Vincent P. Ringrose, Jr. MD