



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

Representative Lonnie Reed
Chair - Energy and Technology Committee
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Representative Lonnie Reed
Testimony in Support of SB 357
March 20, 2015
Environment Committee

Good Afternoon honorable Chairs Senator Kennedy and Representative Albis, Ranking Members Senator Chapin, Representative Shaban and esteemed members of the Environment Committee. my name is State Representative Lonnie Reed and I represent the 102nd District, Branford.

I am grateful to the Environment Committee for embracing the Shellfish Coordinating Council concept and turning it into an Environment Committee Bill. I am speaking in support of SB357.

As many of you know, among our scenic and productive assets in Branford are the Thimble Islands that have a history of generating legendary shellfish.

Among the constituents I hear from repeatedly expressing serious concerns about fairness with aspects of the shellfish system are a variety of shellfish producers and harvesters who operate in my district and the neighboring Town of Guilford.

We have companies, some family operated, who have been in the industry for a long time. And we have new arrivals, young people who have earned Aquaculture degrees and create successful boutique businesses by using the latest techniques and technologies.

Some Shellfish Industry constituents often complain that the Department of Agriculture's methods for administering various shellfish regulations are frustratingly random and uninformed.

An Aquaculture Coordinating Council could approach the problems with fresh eyes and hopefully better understand the full spectrum shellfish companies operating today - companies large and small.

I also hear repeatedly that some Shellfish business people are quite frankly reluctant to complain about unfair treatment for fear of reprisals, so I applaud the inclusion of the Whistleblower provision to protect and encourage those who observe behaviors that need to be reported.

Again, thank you for turning this into a Committee Bill and I urge your support as it moves forward in the process.