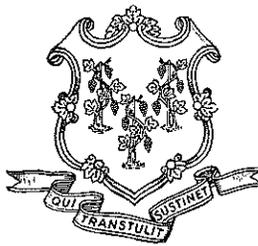


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State of Connecticut

SENATE

Fourteenth District

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Testimony to the Environment Committee

**Proposed Senate Bill 357 An Act Concerning the Promotion of the Shellfish Industry
in Connecticut**

March 20, 2015

Chairman Kennedy, Chairman Albis, Ranking Members Chapin and Shaban, and distinguished members of the Environment Committee, I am Gayle Slossberg and I represent the 14th Senatorial District which includes Milford, Orange, West Haven and Woodbridge. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today in support of **SB 357 An Act Concerning the Promotion of the Shellfish Industry in Connecticut**.

The purpose of this legislation is to create a coordinating council that will compel the State and our shellfish industry members to work together in a cooperative manner that will benefit both our State and our shellfish industry. This independent coordinating council will oversee the policies and procedures of the Bureau of Aquaculture to develop and promote the shellfish industry.

As you know, for many generations, people in the State of Connecticut have relied on shellfish farming to support their families. For many years, the State worked hand in hand with our shell fisherman to bring safe shellfish to market, support these family businesses and grow an industry that brings in nearly three quarter of a million dollars in State revenues every year. Unfortunately, over the last several years, that relationship has broken down to the degree where there is little productive communication and policy is too often made by edict and to the detriment of the industry. This bill seeks to restore a cooperative relationship and work toward common goals.

Many states including Hawaii, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, Virginia and Washington have all passed similar legislation that has allowed their shellfish industries to thrive. More specifically, the language in this bill is based on statutory language from Maine where members of their shellfish industry work together with the State to develop policies and pass regulations.

I hope that you will join me in supporting SB 537, which will help Connecticut's shellfish industry prosper. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gayle", with a long, sweeping underline.

State Senator Gayle S. Slossberg