



House of Representatives

File No. 745

General Assembly

January Session, 2015

(Reprint of File No. 235)

Substitute House Bill No. 6839
As Amended by House
Amendment Schedules "A" and "B"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner
April 24, 2015

AN ACT CONCERNING A LONG ISLAND SOUND BLUE PLAN AND RESOURCE AND USE INVENTORY.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2015*) (a) There is established a
2 Long Island Sound Resource and Use Inventory and Blue Plan
3 Advisory Committee that shall assist the Commissioner of Energy and
4 Environmental Protection with the drafting of the Long Island Sound
5 Resource and Use Inventory and the Long Island Sound Blue Plan,
6 described in subsection (b) of this section. Such advisory committee
7 shall consist of the following members: (1) The Commissioners of
8 Energy and Environmental Protection, Transportation, and
9 Agriculture, or said commissioners' designees, (2) the Secretary of the
10 Office of Policy and Management, or the secretary's designee, (3) a
11 faculty member of the marine sciences programs at The University of
12 Connecticut, as appointed by the Governor, (4) a representative of the
13 Connecticut Siting Council, (5) a representative of the marine trades
14 industry, as appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, (6) a
15 representative of a conservation organization that specializes in coastal

16 issues, as appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, (7) a
17 representative of the gas and electric distribution industries, as
18 appointed by the Governor, (8) a representative of the commercial
19 finfish industry, as appointed by the speaker of the House of
20 Representatives, (9) a representative of the recreational fishing and
21 hunting community, as appointed by the minority leader of the House
22 of Representatives, (10) a representative of a nonprofit conservation
23 organization with expertise in marine assessments and planning, as
24 appointed by the Governor, (11) a representative of either the shellfish
25 industry or an organization familiar with commercial or recreational
26 aquaculture, as appointed by the Governor, (12) two representatives of
27 coastal municipalities, one appointed by the majority leader of the
28 House of Representatives and one appointed by the Governor, and (13)
29 a representative of the commercial boating or shipping industries,
30 appointed by the majority leader of the Senate. The Commissioner of
31 Energy and Environmental Protection shall convene the first meeting
32 of such advisory committee not later than sixty days after the effective
33 date of this section and shall serve as the chairperson of such advisory
34 committee. The commissioner may request members of the advisory
35 committee to assist with administrative functions of the advisory
36 committee, including, but not limited to, convening and noticing
37 meetings and drafting assessments and reports. The advisory
38 committee shall be located in the Department of Energy and
39 Environmental Protection for administrative purposes only.

40 (b) The Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection, in
41 conjunction with the Long Island Sound Resource and Use Inventory
42 and Blue Plan Advisory Committee, established pursuant to
43 subsection (a) of this section, and within available resources, shall: (1)
44 Coordinate the completion of a Long Island Sound Resource and Use
45 Inventory by a Long Island Sound Inventory and Science
46 subcommittee to be convened by The University of Connecticut. Such
47 resource and use inventory shall be comprised of the best available
48 information and data regarding the natural resources within Long
49 Island Sound and the uses of Long Island Sound, including, but not

50 limited to, all: (A) Plants; (B) animals; (C) habitats; (D) ecologically
51 significant areas in nearshore and offshore waters and substrates of
52 such waters; (E) uses of such waters and substrates, including, but not
53 limited to: (i) Recreational and commercial boating, (ii) recreational
54 and commercial fishing, (iii) waterfowl hunting, (iv) shellfish beds, (v)
55 aquaculture facilities, (vi) shipping corridors, (vii) energy facilities, and
56 (viii) electric power line, gas pipeline and telecommunications
57 crossings; and (F) any updates and additions to the comprehensive
58 environmental assessment and plan completed, in accordance with
59 section 25-157a of the general statutes; and (2) develop a Long Island
60 Sound Blue Plan that may include maps, illustrations and other media.
61 Such Long Island Sound Blue Plan shall: (A) Establish the state's goals,
62 siting priorities and standards for ensuring effective stewardship of the
63 waters of Long Island Sound held in trust for the benefit of the public;
64 (B) promote science-based management practices that take into
65 account the existing natural, social, cultural, historic and economic
66 characteristics of planning areas within Long Island Sound; (C)
67 preserve and protect traditional riparian and water-dependent uses
68 and activities; (D) promote maximum public accessibility to Long
69 Island Sound's waters for traditional public trust uses, such as
70 recreational and commercial boating and fishing, except when
71 necessary to protect coastal resources, preserve public health, safety
72 and welfare, or when it is in the interest of national security; (E) reflect
73 the importance of the waters of Long Island Sound to the citizens of
74 this state who derive livelihoods and recreational benefits from
75 boating and fishing; (F) analyze the implications of existing and
76 potential uses and users of Long Island Sound with a focus on
77 avoiding potential use conflicts; (G) be consistent with the Long Island
78 Sound Resources and Uses Inventory, prepared pursuant to
79 subdivision (1) of this subsection, with provision for the ongoing
80 acquisition and application of up-to-date resource and use data,
81 including seafloor mapping; (H) reflect the value of biodiversity and
82 ecosystem health in regard to the interdependence of ecosystems; (I)
83 identify and protect special, sensitive or unique estuarine and marine
84 life and habitats, including, but not limited to, scenic and visual

85 resources; (J) adapt to evolving knowledge and understanding of the
86 marine environment, including adaptation to climate change and rise
87 in sea level; (K) foster sustainable uses that capitalize on economic
88 opportunity without significant detriment to the ecology or natural
89 beauty of Long Island Sound; (L) support the infrastructure necessary
90 to sustain the economy and quality of life for the citizens of this state;
91 (M) be coordinated, to the maximum extent feasible, with local,
92 regional and federal planning entities and agencies, including, but not
93 limited to, the Long Island Sound Study and National Ocean Policy's
94 Northeast Regional Planning Body and the Connecticut-New York Bi-
95 State Marine Spatial Planning Working Group; (N) be coordinated,
96 developed and implemented, to the maximum extent feasible, with the
97 state of New York; (O) be developed through a transparent and
98 inclusive process that seeks widespread participation of the public and
99 stakeholders and encourages public participation in decision making;
100 (P) identify appropriate locations and performance standards for
101 activities, uses and facilities regulated under existing state permit
102 programs, including, but not limited to, measures to guide siting of
103 uses in a manner compatible with said Long Island Sound Blue Plan;
104 (Q) be consistent with the state plan of conservation and development
105 and the goals and policies described in section 22a-92 of the general
106 statutes; and (R) reflect the importance of planning for Long Island
107 Sound as an estuary that crosses state boundaries, including the
108 identification of potential measures that encourage such planning.

109 (c) For the purposes of this section, the submerged lands and waters
110 subject to the commissioner's planning, management and coordination
111 authority under the Long Island Sound Blue Plan shall include Long
112 Island Sound and its bays and inlets from the mean high water line, as
113 defined by the most recent data of the National Oceanic and
114 Atmospheric Administration, to the state's waterward boundaries with
115 the states of New York and Rhode Island. Any siting policies,
116 identification of locations, or performance standards for activities, uses
117 and facilities under the Long Island Sound Blue Plan shall apply in a
118 spatial planning area located seaward of the bathymetric contour of

119 minus ten feet North American Vertical Datum to the state's
120 waterward boundaries with the states of New York and Rhode Island
121 provided such planning area shall not extend into any river that flows
122 into the sound beyond the first motor vehicle bridge or railroad bridge
123 that crosses such river or area along such river that is authorized by
124 the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development,
125 pursuant to section 32-70 of the general statutes, to be an enterprise
126 zone that shall be known as a defense plant zone. Such spatial
127 planning area shall be designated on a map to be prepared by the
128 advisory committee established pursuant to subsection (a) of this
129 section.

130 (d) The Long Island Sound Resource and Use Inventory and Blue
131 Plan Advisory Committee shall hold not less than three public
132 hearings in different coastal municipalities of the state to receive
133 comments and submissions from the public and interested persons
134 and may provide for other public outreach and input measures, as
135 appropriate, to assure sufficient stakeholder engagement and
136 representation, provided one such public hearing shall be held in a
137 coastal municipality east of the Connecticut River, one such public
138 hearing shall be held in a coastal municipality west of the Housatonic
139 River and one such public hearing shall be held in a costal
140 municipality located between the Connecticut River and the
141 Housatonic River. The advisory committee shall assist the
142 commissioner in completing a draft of the Long Island Sound Resource
143 and Use Inventory and the Long Island Sound Blue Plan not later than
144 March 1, 2019.

145 (e) During the drafting of the Long Island Sound Resource and Use
146 Inventory and Long Island Sound Blue Plan, and prior to making such
147 draft available for public comment, in accordance with subsection (f) of
148 this section, the advisory committee shall consult with the
149 Commissioner of Economic and Community Development,
150 representatives of the telecommunications industry, waterfront
151 businesses, the state's two federally recognized Indian tribes and the
152 tourism or recreation industry. Additionally, the advisory committee

153 shall, to the extent feasible, consult with the applicable New York state
154 agencies, advisory counterparts and the Connecticut-New York Bi-
155 State Marine Spatial Planning Working Group to devise a mutually
156 agreeable process for developing the Long Island Sound Resource and
157 Use Inventory and Long Island Sound Blue Plan.

158 (f) Upon completion of the draft Long Island Sound Resource and
159 Use Inventory and the Long Island Sound Blue Plan, the
160 Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection shall make
161 such draft available for public review and comment and shall publish
162 notice thereof in the Environmental Monitor and the Connecticut Law
163 Journal. The commissioner shall cause such draft and notice of public
164 comment period to be posted on the Internet web site of the
165 Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the Office of
166 Policy and Management. Such notice of public comment period shall
167 provide for a public comment period of not less than ninety days. Not
168 later than ninety days after the end of such public comment period, the
169 commissioner shall adopt a final draft of the Long Island Sound
170 Resource and Use Inventory and the Long Island Sound Blue Plan.

171 (g) Upon completion of the final draft of the Long Island Sound
172 Blue Plan, such plan shall be submitted to the joint standing committee
173 of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the
174 environment. Said committee, not later than forty-five days after the
175 start of the next occurring legislative session following receipt of such
176 plan, shall conduct a public hearing on the plan. Not later than forty-
177 five days after such public hearing, said committee shall submit such
178 plan, in conjunction with the committee's recommendation for
179 approval or disapproval of such plan, to the General Assembly. Such
180 plan shall become effective when approved by a majority vote of each
181 chamber of the General Assembly. In the event that the General
182 Assembly disapproves the plan, in whole or in part, such plan shall be
183 deemed to be rejected and shall be returned to the advisory committee
184 for revision.

185 (h) Upon approval of such inventory and plan: (1) Such plan shall

186 be considered as a factor in the review of applications pursuant to
 187 sections 16-50k, 22-11h, 22-11i, 22-11j, 22a-6k, 22a-359, 22a-361, 22a-
 188 363b, 22a-363d, 22a-430, 25-157b, 26-194 and 26-257a of the general
 189 statutes and Section 401 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act
 190 and may be utilized for guidance in preapplication discussions
 191 between the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection
 192 and applicants, (2) the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental
 193 Protection shall seek necessary federal approval to incorporate the
 194 Long Island Sound Blue Plan as an enforceable policy in the state's
 195 coastal management program under the federal Coastal Zone
 196 Management Act, (3) the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental
 197 Protection shall, within available resources, develop and implement a
 198 public outreach and information program to provide information to
 199 the public regarding the Long Island Sound Blue Plan, (4) the
 200 Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection shall provide
 201 for the review and update of such inventory and plan at least once
 202 every five years and any revision to such inventory and plan shall
 203 become effective upon approval by the General Assembly, in
 204 accordance with subsection (g) of this section, (5) the advisory
 205 committee, not later than six months after such approval, shall advise
 206 the commissioner on the operation, implementation and updating of
 207 the inventory and plan, as applicable, and shall meet on a quarterly
 208 basis to review implementation of such plan, identify emerging issues
 209 and recommend any necessary or desirable alterations or
 210 improvements to such plan, and (6) the advisory committee shall,
 211 within available resources, hold not less than one public hearing each
 212 year to receive comments and submissions from the public on such
 213 inventory and plan.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2015	New section

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 16 \$	FY 17 \$
Various State Agencies	GF - Potential Cost	Less than 1,000	Less than 1,000

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

This bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) commissioner, within available resources, to (1) coordinate the completion of an inventory of Long Island Sound’s uses and natural resources by a University of Connecticut subcommittee (the “LIS Resource and Use Inventory”) and (2) develop a plan to preserve and protect the Sound that may include maps, illustrations, and other media (the “Long Island Sound Blue Plan”). The commissioner must do these things in conjunction with a 16-member Long Island Sound Resource and Use Inventory and Blue Plan Advisory Committee the bill creates.

As DEEP’s Office of Long Island Sound Programs has expertise and capacity¹ to perform this work, there is no fiscal impact anticipated for these requirements.

There may be a cost of less than \$1,000 in FY 16 and in FY 17 to those agencies participating in the Long Island Sound Resource and Use Inventory and Blue Plan Advisory Committee to reimburse legislators and agency staff for mileage expenses.

¹ Approximately twenty (20) full-time equivalents (FTE’s).

House "A" alters the underlying bill by: (1) changing the reference from the University of Connecticut Department of Marine Sciences to the school's marine sciences program; (2) changing what the resource and use inventory will be comprised of; (3) and eliminates an allowance of gifts, grants, donations, or bequests for completion of the Long Island Sound Resources and Use Inventory and development of the Long Island Sound Blue Plan. These changes do not result in a fiscal impact.

House "B" alters the underlying bill by: (1) adding a requirement where a spatial planning area must be designated and (2) alters the composition of the advisory committee. These changes are also not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 6839 (as amended by House "A" and "B")******AN ACT CONCERNING A LONG ISLAND SOUND BLUE PLAN AND RESOURCE AND USE INVENTORY.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) commissioner, within available resources, to:

1. coordinate the completion of an inventory of Long Island Sound's uses and natural resources by a University of Connecticut (UConn) subcommittee (the "Long Island Sound Resource and Use Inventory") and
2. develop a plan to preserve and protect the Sound that may include maps, illustrations, and other media (the "Long Island Sound Blue Plan").

The commissioner must do these things in conjunction with a 16-member Long Island Sound Resource and Use Inventory and Blue Plan Advisory Committee, which the bill creates.

The bill establishes a process for developing the inventory and plan, including provisions for public input. The draft inventory and plan must be completed by March 1, 2019 and the public must have at least 90 days for review and comment. The commissioner must adopt a final draft plan within 90 days after the public comment period ends. Once final, the bill requires the plan to be (1) reviewed by the Environment Committee and (2) submitted to the General Assembly for a vote before it can take effect. The bill requires the inventory and plan to be reviewed and updated every five years.

Under the bill, the plan's policies, locations, or standards must

apply in a spatial planning area as depicted on a map the advisory committee prepares. DEEP and other state or local agencies must consider the plan when reviewing applications to conduct certain coastal activities.

*House Amendment "A" (1) removes the DEEP commissioner's authority to accept gifts, grants, donations, or bequests for the inventory and plan; (2) broadens the inventory's scope to include information on waterfowl hunting; and (3) specifies that the advisory committee's UConn faculty member is from the university's marine sciences programs.

*House Amendment "B" (1) exempts certain authorized areas along rivers flowing into the Sound from the spatial planning area and (2) requires the public hearings to be held in three separate areas of the state.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2015

LONG ISLAND SOUND RESOURCE AND USE INVENTORY

Under the bill, the inventory must be completed by a Long Island Sound Inventory and Science subcommittee convened by UConn. It must be comprised of the best available information and data on Long Island Sound's natural resources and uses, including all of its:

1. plants, animals, and habitats;
2. ecologically significant areas in nearshore and offshore waters and their substrates (surfaces where organisms grow);
3. uses of the waters and substrates, such as (a) boating and fishing; (b) waterfowl hunting; (c) shellfish beds; (d) aquaculture and energy facilities; (e) shipping corridors; and (f) electric power line, gas pipeline and telecommunications crossings; and
4. updates and additions to the comprehensive environmental

assessment and plan on Long Island Sound crossings (such as pipelines).

LONG ISLAND SOUND BLUE PLAN

Purposes

The bill requires the plan to:

1. establish the state's goals, siting priorities, and standards for effective stewardship of the Sound's waters held in trust for public benefit;
2. promote science-based management practices that consider existing natural, social, cultural, historic, and economic characteristics of planning areas within the Sound;
3. preserve and protect traditional riparian (banks of rivers or other waters) and water-dependent uses and activities;
4. promote maximum public access to the Sound's waters for traditional public trust uses, such as boating and fishing, unless it is (a) a national security interest or (b) necessary to protect coastal resources or preserve public health, safety, and welfare;
5. reflect the Sound's importance to state residents who make a living from or enjoy recreational boating or fishing;
6. analyze the implications of existing and potential uses and users of the Sound, focusing on avoiding conflicts;
7. reflect the value of biodiversity and ecosystem health, with regard to ecosystem interdependence;
8. identify and protect special, sensitive, and unique estuarine and marine life and habitats, such as scenic and visual resources;
9. adapt to evolving knowledge and understanding of the marine environment, including climate change and sea level rise adaptation;

10. foster sustainable uses that capitalize on economic opportunity without significant detriment to the Sound's ecology or natural beauty;
11. support infrastructure needed to sustain the state's economy and quality of life;
12. identify appropriate locations and performance standards for activities, uses, and facilities regulated under state permit programs, such as measures to guide siting uses in ways consistent with the plan; and
13. reflect the importance of planning for the Sound as an estuary that crosses state boundaries, including identifying potential measures that encourage the planning.

Under the bill, the plan must be consistent with the inventory described above and provide for ongoing acquisition and application of up-to-date resource and use data, including seafloor mapping. It must be consistent with the State's Plan of Conservation and Development and the goals and policies in the state's Coastal Management Act.

The bill requires the plan to be developed by a transparent and inclusive process that seeks widespread public and stakeholder participation and encourages public input in decision making. The plan must be coordinated, developed, and implemented with New York, to the greatest extent possible. It must also be coordinated, to the greatest extent feasible, with local, regional, and federal planning entities and agencies that include the (1) Connecticut-New York Bi-State Marine Spatial Planning Working Group, (2) Long Island Sound Study, and (3) National Ocean Policy's Northeast Regional Planning Body (see BACKGROUND).

Areas Subject to the Plan

Waters and Submerged Lands. The waters and submerged lands subject to the commissioner's planning, management, and

coordination authority under the plan include Long Island Sound and its bays and inlets, from the mean high water line to the state's waterward boundaries with New York and Rhode Island. The bill specifies that the high water line is defined by the most recent data of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Spatial Planning Area. The bill requires the advisory committee (see below) to prepare a map showing a spatial planning area where the plan's siting policies, location identifications, or performance standards for activities, uses, and facilities must apply.

The bill specifies that the spatial planning area is located seaward of the bathymetric contour (line of underwater depth) of minus ten feet North American Vertical Datum to the state's waterward boundaries with New York and Rhode Island. But it does not extend into (1) a river that flows into the Sound beyond the first motor vehicle or railroad bridge crossing the river or (2) an area along the river that the economic and community development (DECD) commissioner approves as an enterprise zone, which, under the bill, must be known as a defense plant zone (see BACKGROUND).

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND COMMENTS

Developing the Draft Inventory and Plan

To help the commissioner develop the inventory and plan, the bill requires the advisory committee to hold at least three public hearings in different coastal municipalities to receive public comments and submissions. The bill specifies that one hearing each must be held (1) east of the Connecticut River, (2) west of the Housatonic River, and (3) between the Connecticut and Housatonic rivers. It allows the committee to provide other public outreach and input measures to assure stakeholder engagement and representation.

While helping to complete the draft inventory and plan, but before they are available for public comment, the committee must consult with the DECD commissioner and representatives from:

1. the telecommunications industry,
2. waterfront businesses,
3. the state's two federally recognized Indian tribes, and
4. the tourism or recreation industry.

The bill also requires the committee, to the extent feasible, to consult with applicable New York state agencies, advisory counterparts, and the Connecticut-New York Bi-State Marine Spatial Planning Working Group to create a mutually agreeable process to develop the inventory and plan.

After Draft Completion

Once the draft inventory and plan are completed, the bill requires the DEEP commissioner to make them available for public review and comment for at least 90 days. He must post them, and the notice of public comment period, on DEEP's and the Office of Policy and Management's websites. Notice must also be published in the *Environmental Monitor* and the *Connecticut Law Journal*.

The commissioner must adopt a final draft no later than 90 days after the public comment period ends.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY REVIEW

Under the bill, once a final draft of the plan is completed, the commissioner must submit it to the Environment Committee for review. The committee must hold a public hearing on the plan within 45 days after the start of the legislative session following the plan's receipt. It must, within 45 days after this public hearing, submit to the General Assembly (1) the plan and (2) its recommendation for approval or disapproval.

The plan takes effect when it is approved by a majority vote of each chamber of the General Assembly. If the legislature disapproves it, in whole or part, it is deemed rejected and must be returned to the

advisory committee for revision.

The bill requires revisions to the inventory and plan to be submitted to the Environment Committee and approved by the General Assembly, following the same procedure as described above. The DEEP commissioner is responsible for reviewing and updating the inventory and plan at least once every five years.

PUBLIC OUTREACH PROGRAM

The bill requires the DEEP commissioner to develop and implement a public outreach and information program to inform the public about the plan. It also requires the advisory committee to hold at least one public hearing each year to receive public comments and submissions on the inventory and plan. The program and hearing must be accomplished within available resources.

USE OF THE INVENTORY AND PLAN

Under the bill, once the inventory and plan are approved as described, the plan must be considered when reviewing applications for:

1. aquaculture operations permits or producer licenses and seaweed planting and cultivation licenses;
2. shellfish grounds leases;
3. certificates of environmental compatibility and public need from the Connecticut Siting Council;
4. emergency or temporary authorizations for certain regulated activities to prevent loss of life, health, wealth, or property;
5. electric power line, gas pipeline, or telecommunications crossings of Long Island Sound;
6. dredging, erecting structures, placing fill, obstructions, or encroachments, or conducting work related to these activities, in tidal, coastal, or navigable waters waterward of the coastal

jurisdiction line; or

7. coastal structure maintenance and other activities eligible for a certificate of permission from DEEP;
8. discharging water, substance, or material into state waters; or
9. a state water quality certification pursuant to federal law.

It allows the plan to be used for guidance in pre-application discussions between applicants and the DEEP commissioner.

The bill also requires the commissioner to seek federal approval needed to incorporate the plan as an enforceable policy in the state's coastal management program under the federal Coastal Zone Management Act.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Membership

Under the bill, the advisory committee consists of 16 members. It includes (1) the DEEP, transportation, and agriculture commissioners, or their designees; (2) the OPM secretary, or his designee; (3) one Connecticut Siting Council representative; and (4) 11 appointed members, as Table 1 shows.

Table 1: Advisory Committee Appointees

<i>Appointing Authority</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Qualifications</i>
Governor	Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A faculty member from UConn's marine sciences programs ● A representative of the gas and electric distribution industries ● A representative of the shellfish industry or an organization familiar with commercial or recreational aquaculture ● A representative of a nonprofit conservation organization with expertise in marine assessments and planning ● A representative of coastal municipalities

Senate president pro tempore	One	A representative of a conservation organization that specializes in coastal issues
Senate majority leader	One	A representative of the commercial boating or shipping industries
Senate minority leader	One	A representative of the marine trades industry
House speaker	One	A representative of the commercial finfish industry
House majority leader	One	A representative of coastal municipalities
House minority leader	One	A representative of the recreational fishing and hunting community

Under the bill, the DEEP commissioner serves as the committee's chairperson and must convene the first meeting by August 30, 2015 (i.e., 60 days after the bill's effective date). The bill allows him to ask committee members to help with administrative functions, such as convening and noticing meetings and drafting assessments and reports.

The bill places the committee in DEEP for administrative purposes only. Thus, it makes DEEP responsible for, among other things, providing administrative and clerical functions for the committee to the extent the DEEP commissioner considers necessary.

Committee Responsibilities

In addition to helping the DEEP commissioner develop the draft inventory and plan, the bill requires the committee to advise the commissioner on operating, implementing, and updating the inventory and plan within six months after the General Assembly's approval. It must also meet quarterly to review the plan's implementation, identify emerging issues, and recommend any needed or desired changes to the plan.

BACKGROUND

Enterprise Zone

Connecticut's enterprise zone program offers various tax incentives and other benefits for businesses operating in designated economically

distressed areas. Generally, municipalities must be considered “distressed municipalities” to designate an area as an enterprise zone, and the area they choose to designate must meet certain poverty or unemployment criteria. The DECD commissioner approves the zones. There are currently 17 enterprise zones.

Long Island Sound Study

In 1985, in an effort to better protect Long Island Sound, the federal Environmental Protection Agency, Connecticut, and New York formed the Long Island Sound Study, a bi-state partnership consisting of federal and state agencies, user groups, organizations, and individuals seeking to restore and protect the Sound.

National Ocean Policy’s Northeast Regional Planning Body

Formed by a presidential Executive Order in 2010, the National Ocean Policy was established to help manage the country’s oceans and coasts. The policy encourages a science-based spatial planning process to analyze current and future uses of ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes areas. The approach is executed through regional planning bodies. Members of the Northeast Regional Planning Body include federal, tribal, state, and New England Fishery Management Council representatives.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 28 Nay 1 (03/11/2015)

Planning and Development Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 20 Nay 0 (04/14/2015)