

Environment Committee  
Public Testimony  
March 11, 2016

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT of HOUSE BILL 5583

Good Morning Co-Chairs Senator Kennedy, Representative Albis; Vice Chairs Senator Moore, Representative Arconti; Ranking Members Senator Chapin, Representative Shaban; and esteemed members of the Committee. My name is Mike and Diane Widger are writing in SUPPORT of House Bill 5583 ***AN ACT CONCERNING AN AGREEMENT REGARDING ANNUAL WATER LEVEL DRAW DOWNS AT BASHAN LAKE IN THE TOWN OF EAST HADDAM.***

My husband has been on Bashan Lake since 1961 when his parents bought the cottage. Most years the water is let down to avoid damage to docks and retaining walls. However, there were also times when we thought the lake would not be let down because of issues of getting the correct person from the state involved. If the water is not let down on a yearly basis, the damage to both docks and retaining walls would be significant and the repair costs would be large. However, this can easily be avoided if the water was let down every year. We need to ensure that the lake water will be drawn down every year in order to eliminate the potential damage caused by ice. We do not believe there are any families on the lake that can afford the extensive repairs on a yearly basis. The house bill 5583 proposed by Melissa Ziobron would guarantee that the lake would be lowered every year and we would like to see this bill pass.

The dam repair looks great. However, when the dam project didn't start on time and caused the project to fall behind they had to let the water out again. Letting the water out again is causing this year and it looks like next year before the lake might be back up to capacity.

Because the water level is down, this contributed to all the weeds that grew and they grew very tall and thick. With the weeds, we couldn't get close to the water. If it is going to take another year or two before the lake regains the water, the weed issue will continue to get worse for the next two years. Bashan Lake has always been one of the cleanest lakes in Connecticut and we would like to keep it that way but we are afraid that the water will have issues with all the weeds and as the weeds start to decay as the water returns to the lake. We want to keep the lake as

clean as possible so everyone can enjoy it. We love this lake and want to continue to enjoy it with our children and grandchildren.

Senator Kennedy and Representative Albis, we are hoping for your support of the bill 5583 to help us protect the lake and the land around the lake. Thank you very much for visiting Bashan Lake last summer to get an understanding of how critical the issues are and to see how beautiful the lake truly is.

Sincerely,

Mike and Diane Widger