

THE OLD STONE HOUSE

TOWN OF GUILFORD

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Joseph S. Mazza
First Selectman

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February 18, 2016

Environment Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 3200
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: SB- 78 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISPOSITION OF DREDGED MATERIALS FROM CERTAIN HARBORS AND PORTS ON LONG ISLAND SOUND

To the Committee:

As First Selectman of the Town of Guilford, I urge the Committee to reject SB-78, An Act Concerning the Disposition of Dredged Materials from Certain Harbors and Ports on Long Island Sound. This bill would place a financial hardship on the Town of Guilford, as there is no local land site available for Guilford to dispose of any dredging material, nor is there any practical access to any upland disposal site. Thus, the language in this bill potentially requires that future dredging material be disposed of in the Atlantic Ocean. This would be extremely costly to any dredging projects that the Town of Guilford would have to undertake.

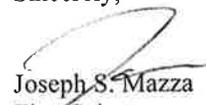
The Town of Guilford operates a town marina and a federal channel that requires dredging approximately every five – eight years, to accommodate both private and commercial vessels. In addition, the Guilford Yacht Club also requires dredging on a yearly basis to maintain a navigable channel. Each time the Town Marina basin is dredged, the cost is approximately \$250,000 - \$300,000. It is estimated that should the dredge material be disposed of in the Atlantic Ocean, these costs would double or even triple. This would become an undue burden on the boat owners whose fees fund the dredging operations.

Long Island Sound supports many activities, including boating, which in turn supports both Guilford and the surrounding region's economy. Guilford, like other small shoreline communities, heavily depends on the economic activity generated by our marina. If we were unable to sustain the cost of operating our marina due to the high cost of dredging the channel, Guilford would lose the significant tourism revenue created by the marina throughout the year. This would negatively impact our local merchants, including those surrounding our historic downtown Green.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Dredged Material Management Plan identifies alternatives for the handling of dredging materials, including wetlands restoration, which will help protect Long Island Sound. These environmentally sound alternatives reflect a thoughtful, balanced approach to the disposal of dredging materials.

I encourage the Environment Committee to reject SB-78, to ensure that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Dredged Material Management Plan may be implemented to help support our local economies while helping to protect the natural resources of Long Island Sound.

Sincerely,


Joseph S. Mazza
First Selectman
Town of Guilford