



Statement of Testimony
Environment Committee
Senate Bill 78
February 19, 2016

Committee Chairs, Senator Kennedy & Representative Albis, Ranking Members Senator Chapin and Representative Shaban and Members of the Environment Committee,

I am Kathleen Burns, of Noank, Connecticut and I present this testimony today representing the interests of over three hundred marine related businesses and their employees as Executive Director of the Connecticut Marine Trades Association to offer some brief comments on **Senate Bill 78, An Act Concerning the Disposition of Dredged Materials from Certain Harbors and Ports on Long Island Sound.**

For over a year and a half our members having been engulfed in the ongoing process of finding cost effective and environmentally consistent methods of dredged material disposal. These are small marinas and yacht clubs, the core of working waterfronts along our shoreline.

The troubles began when after years of peaceful co-stewards of Long Island Sound, the NY Department of State sought to curb legal use of two eastern Long Island disposal locations, New London and Cornfield Shoals as a large federal project, the Mystic River was providing clean cap material for those projects. Nine private facility projects were denied use of those legal locations and whose dredging costs escalated from \$20 per cubic yard to in some cases over \$100 per cubic yard.

This action came in advance of the long awaited Army Corps of Engineers issuance of the Dredge Material Management Plan supported by Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. Just recently the EPA announced its Rule Making in response to the DMMP which elects to maintain the disposal locations at Central and Western remain open for approved open water disposal. The Eastern supplemental opinion on the future of the New London and Cornfield Shoals sites or other sites as designated has yet to be released but which will become part and parcel to the whole. A critical piece for the aforementioned eastern marinas.

The Corps and EPA's findings after an exhaustive study and volumes of research is that while disposal alternatives if available should be considered for dredge material, the majority of the fine grained material that makes up much of Connecticut's dredging needs is suitable for open water disposal after it goes through the rigorous testing – as it has been and continues to today.

We strongly believe the Corps and EPA have lead and delivered reasonable, thoughtful, environmentally sound and economically viable options for dredge disposal including their ruling on

open-water disposal. We believe this bill in fact is not taking into consideration the efforts the DMMP and the EPA have set forth and an effort that has been fully supported by our own DEEP.

Dredging is a required and critical piece of maintaining access. Navigable access. It has long been part of Connecticut's economic engine, and anything that impedes this critical transportation sector is dangerous to the economy and to the wellbeing of our citizens whose lives depend on the working waterfront.

On behalf of the 7,000 plus employees who make a living, support their families and grow our State I urge you to seriously consider the points I have made here today. We appreciate the opportunity to testify and hope that you support and understand how critical and impactful this action will be to our State's future.

Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted, this 19th Day of February, 2016

Kathleen M. Burns
Executive Director
Connecticut Marine Trades Association, Inc.