



TOWN OF OLD LYME

OFFICE OF THE SELECTMEN

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To: Environment Committee

RE: Testimony on S.B. No. 78 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISPOSITION OF DREDGED MATERIALS FROM CERTAIN HARBORS AND PORTS ON LONG ISLAND SOUND.

Dear Senator Kennedy, Representative Albis, Senator Chapin, Representative Shaban, and other esteemed members of the Environment Committee,

My apologies for not appearing before you on this issue, but my schedule would not allow it. My name is Bonnie Reemsnyder, First Selectwoman of Old Lyme, and I am writing to you in regards to the proposed S.B. No. 78, An Act Concerning the Disposition of Dredged Materials from Certain Harbors and Ports on Long Island Sound, which addresses Open Water Dredged material relocation sites. As a shoreline community bordering the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound, our economy, culture and recreation are interwoven with the maritime and seashore commerce. As stewards of the beautiful CT River, we understand the need to protect the environment, the environment of the River, the Sound and all of our estuaries. This protection needs to be carefully balanced with economic reality in our communities. This became clear to me last fall when educating myself on the Army Corps of Engineers' (ACOE) recommendations on the Management of Dredged Materials. In fact, I spoke in favor of the recommended plan at that time, which would prioritize use of dredged materials for marshland and beach restoration, but if the materials did not meet the quality standards, could be relocated to existing relocation sites in Long Island Sound. These sites are highly controlled by both CT DEEP and ACOE and both agencies will NOT allow highly toxic dredge spoils to be relocated in those four existing relocation sites. It is an economic reality that not allowing open water disposal will ultimately put marinas, shipyards and other water dependent businesses out of business because of the higher costs of dredging should open water disposal be banned. The Town of Old Lyme is currently completing the dredging of the Four Mile and Black Hall Rivers, at a cost of 1.6 million dollars. This cost would be far greater if we did not have the option to use the site off of New Haven for our dredged material, which was just shy of meeting the standard for marsh restoration. In planning the dredging, all recycled uses of our materials were investigated because we believe in protecting the environment as do so many of our Connecticut towns and cities.

Please do not give us one more layer of regulation to deal with when we are faced with these economic challenges. The recommendation of the ACOE, resulting from an extended study is a well thought out plan that was five years in the making at a cost to US taxpayers of \$15,000,000. It balances environmental protections with economic realities. I urge you to oppose this bill and rely on the recommendation of the ACOE. Thank you for your time in reviewing this issue and considering my testimony.

Bonnie Q. Reemsnyder
Feb. 19, 2016