
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 338

AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF COMMUNITY INVESTMENT ACCOUNT FUNDS FOR COMBATTING INVASIVE SPECIES.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to use some of its community investment account (CIA) funds to provide grants to certain lake authorities or associations to control invasive species. Current law requires DEEP to use all of its CIA funds for grants to municipalities to purchase open space. Under the bill, DEEP must use the funds for both municipal open space grants and lake authority or association invasive species grants.

Under the bill, a lake authority or association grant cannot exceed (1) one-third of the reasonable costs for the authority's or association's invasive species control measures or project and (2) \$25,000. In order to be eligible for a grant, the lake must be accessible to the general public.

Before DEEP can distribute funds to a lake authority or association, the bill requires the auditors of public accounts, within available resources, to conduct a forensic accounting of CIA expenditures for the last two fiscal years. The auditors must report, by January 1, 2019, to the Appropriations and Environment committees.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2018

BACKGROUND

Community Investment Account

By law, the CIA is a separate, non-lapsing General Fund account that provides funding for open space, farmland preservation, historic preservation, affordable housing, and promoting agriculture.

Funds are divided between DEEP, the Department of Economic and Community Development, the Department of Housing, and the

Department of Agriculture. The account is capitalized through a \$40 land recording fee (CGS § 7-34a(e)).

Related Law

By law, DEEP administers an aquatic invasive species management grant program, through which DEEP may make grants to a municipality for up to:

1. 75% of the cost of conducting an aquatic invasive species diagnostic feasibility study related to reducing an aquatic invasive species population in an inland body of water or
2. 50% of the cost of conducting a restoration project in an inland body of water by controlling and managing an aquatic invasive species population that existed there as of July 1, 2014 (CGS § 22a-339i).

Related Bill

HB 5129 (File 2), reported favorably by the Environment Committee, requires the motor vehicles commissioner, beginning January 1, 2020, to issue “Save Our Lakes” commemorative license plates. It creates a Connecticut lakes and ponds preservation account that DEEP must use, among other things, to restore and rehabilitate state lakes and ponds and on programs to eradicate aquatic invasive species.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 16 Nay 14 (03/22/2018)