

Dear Environment Committee member,

Please vote in SUPPORT of SB 426—AAC ABANDONED FISHING GEAR IN LONG ISLAND SOUND

In a study conducted by Cornell Cooperative Extension between 2014-2016, it was estimated that there are more than 500,000 lobster traps at the bottom of Long Island Sound. Furthermore, an estimated 90% of these abandoned traps, while in poor condition, are still catching lobster, crabs, sea bass, and other marine life, which in many cases are trapped inside and die.

To make matters worse, these traps also affect navigational safety and damage active fishing equipment and boats on the Sound.

Better collection legislation is needed to remove these traps; current restrictions on eligibility to retrieve these abandoned traps make it almost impossible to mount a full-scale cleanup. SB 426 will ease these restrictions and make it possible to resolve this long-overdue problem. Please support SB 426!

Please vote in SUPPORT of SB 341—AAC CLOTHING FIBER POLLUTION

Microfibers belong to a class of dangerous micro-plastic that are released from synthetic materials such as polyester, nylon, acrylic, and rayon, when garments are washed.

Research shows that these microfibers find their way into the digestive tracts of numerous species of marine life, causing starvation and reproductive failure. They have also been found in fish and other aquatic species consumed by humans. In some cases, microfibers can transport dangerous chemicals into the water. It should trouble everyone that the short- and long-term consequences of microfiber release into our waterways remain unknown.

Companies like Patagonia, Nike, Levi Strauss, VF Corporation, and Puma have all taken steps to mitigate the effects of microplastic pollution. This is a good thing, but it is crucial that we have legislation that holds apparel companies responsible for the effects of their products.

Please vote in SUPPORT of SB 343—AAC THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON THE SAFETY PLANS OF CERTAIN CHEMICAL FACILITIES IN THE STATE AND RESIDENTS OF DISTRESSED COMMUNITIES

I urge you to pass this bill to require updated safety plans for certain chemical facilities that are at risk of coastal and river flooding and severe weather events that would have the potential to release toxic chemicals into waters and soil.

This bill will also establish a Climate Justice Working Group. Many of these chemical facilities are in low-income areas that don't have resources or options available to address flooding events that would cause disaster from chemical spills. The Long Island Blue Plan Inventory lists 17 petroleum terminals located primarily in Bridgeport and New Haven. Plans should be updated and shared with these communities.

I am confident you will support these three bills, and in so doing continue to protect the health of our families, our environment, and Long Island Sound.

Sincerely,

Dr Robert Marra

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