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TWENTIETH SENATE DISTRICT

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**State of Connecticut**  
**SENATE**

**DEPUTY SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER**

**RANKING MEMBER**  
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

**MEMBER**  
EXEC. & LEGIS. NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Testimony  
Environment Committee  
February 15, 2019  
H.B. 5251 and S.B. 226

Senator Cohen, Representative Demicco, Senator Kushner, Senator Miner, Representative Harding, and members of the Environment Committee,

I write to you to testify in support of House Bill 5251 An Act Concerning The Possession and Trade of Shark Fins and to testify in support of Senate Bill 226, An Act Authorizing Dual Landings of Fish in the State.

House Bill 5251 seeks to end the taking of shark fins, meaning, catching sharks, removing the fin, and then tossing the shark back into the water to die and be wasted. This is a barbaric action that I believe is abhorred universally. This bill's intent is laudable and widely supported.

However, the language of the bill does not leave room for the taking of shark fins even with the landing of the entire fish. Fishermen in the state of Connecticut reap an economic benefit from shark fishing in the state that does not include finning the sharks and wasting the rest. I would recommend the committee revise the wording of the bill with language such as, "solely harvested fins," or "unless the entire fish is used," as to ensure that we are not prohibiting the fisherman of the state from the economic benefits of shark fishing.

Senate Bill 226 seeks to authorize dual landings of fish in the state, as collaboration with both New York and Rhode Island. Connecticut fishermen are held to a daily fishing quota that cannot be exceeded, which can lead to the waste of catch that exceeds this quota that may already have been caught before they are able to release, weigh, and record the catch.

This bill provides the opportunity for fisherman that exceed this quota imposed by the state to offload the rest of the taking in other states in the agreement, as long as the DEEP has been notified in advance with agreement. This is an important bill for fisherman as it provides a chance for extra economic opportunity, and combats the potential waste of any over catch.

I would recommend the committee alter lines 18-19 of the bill in regards to the timeline of the notification of DEEP. Currently, the bill states a deadline for notification of no less than 48 hours prior to the take. This deadline is not ideal for fishermen who often do not know what the take will be 48 hours in advance. The industry standard right now is notification one to two hours in advance. I would also ask the committee to consider a seasonal date for this bill, for example winter fishing, rather than year-round.

I want to reiterate my support of both HB 5251 and SB 226, and hope the committee takes time to consider these language and concept changes.

Thank you,  
Paul M. Formica | 20<sup>th</sup> Senate District