

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH  
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



**PA 19-190**—sHB 6637

*Environment Committee*

*Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee*

**AN ACT REQUIRING AN INVASIVE SPECIES STAMP FOR THE OPERATION OF A MOTORBOAT ON THE WATERS OF THE STATE AND ENFORCEMENT OF NOISE ORDINANCES ON CANDLEWOOD LAKE**

**SUMMARY:** This act requires owners of registered vessels (i.e., generally, any type of watercraft except a seaplane) to pay an annual aquatic invasive species (AIS) fee. The fee is \$5 for in-state vessels and \$20 for out-of-state vessels.

A person registering a vessel in Connecticut with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) must pay the AIS fee annually to DMV when he or she pays any required vessel registration fee. (By law, a registration expires on April 30 of the year following its issuance.)

A person with a vessel registered out of state who intends to operate the vessel on inland Connecticut waters must pay the AIS fee to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). The fee must be paid annually and is valid until December 31 of each year. A person who operates an out-of-state registered vessel on inland waters without first paying the AIS fee commits an infraction and is subject to a fine of up to \$85.

The act expands the purposes of the Connecticut lakes and ponds preservation account to include rivers and correspondingly renames the account the Connecticut lakes, rivers, and ponds preservation account. It requires DMV and DEEP to deposit all AIS fee proceeds into this account. The act also requires DEEP to use at least 80% of the AIS fee proceeds for (1) programs to eradicate aquatic invasive species and cyanobacteria blooms; (2) education and public outreach programs about protecting and preserving state lakes, rivers, and ponds; and (3) grants to state and municipal agencies and nonprofit organizations to conduct research and provide education on managing state lakes, rivers, and ponds.

Lastly, the act authorizes DEEP environmental conservation police officers to enforce the noise ordinance of any municipality bordering Candlewood Lake (i.e., Brookfield, Danbury, New Fairfield, New Milford, and Sherman) on the lake's waters. If more than one of these municipalities has a noise ordinance, the officers may enforce the most restrictive one.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** January 1, 2020, except the noise ordinance enforcement provision is effective upon passage.

**CONNECTICUT LAKES, RIVERS, AND PONDS PRESERVATION ACCOUNT**

## OLR PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY

The act expands the Connecticut lakes and ponds preservation account's purposes to include rivers and renames the account to reflect this expansion. (By law, it is a separate, nonlapsing General Fund account.) Thus, the act requires the DEEP commissioner to use the money in the account for the following purposes:

1. restoring and rehabilitating Connecticut lakes, rivers, and ponds;
2. DEEP programs to eradicate aquatic invasive species and cyanobacteria blooms;
3. education and public outreach programs to enhance the public's understanding of the need to preserve and protect the state's lakes, rivers, and ponds;
4. allocating grants to state and municipal agencies and nonprofit organizations to conduct research and provide public education on managing state lakes, rivers, and ponds;
5. funding services that support the protection and conservation of the state's lakes, rivers, and ponds; and
6. reimbursing DMV for the cost to produce, issue, renew, and replace Save Our Lakes commemorative license plates, including administrative expenses.

By law, proceeds from the sale of Save Our Lakes plates are deposited to the account. The DEEP commissioner may also receive private donations to the account.