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## OLR Bill Analysis

### SB 840

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING CONNECTICUT'S SHELLFISH RESTORATION PROGRAM AND THE CONNECTICUT SEAFOOD COUNCIL.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill expands Connecticut's shellfish restoration program by allowing the Department of Agriculture (DoAg) to do the following:

1. acquire, in addition to purchase as under existing law, shell or other cultch material to deposit on state shellfish beds;
2. contract to use a shell recovery vessel to collect and deposit shell on the beds; and
3. receive and deposit on the beds cultch from oyster shell recycling programs DoAg administers or authorizes.

The bill requires private, state, or federal grants and other direct funding for the shellfish restoration program to be deposited in the Shellfish Fund, which DoAg uses to operate the program. It explicitly allows DoAg to use the fund for an oyster shell recycling program it administers with any other person.

Lastly, the bill reconstitutes the Connecticut Seafood Advisory Council and renames it the Connecticut Seafood Development Council. By law, the council, which is within DoAg, must help promote Connecticut seafood products and examine market opportunities.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2021

#### **CONNECTICUT SEAFOOD DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

The bill increases the council's membership from 11 to 13 members. Current law includes four nonvoting members representing DoAg, the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), the

Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), and the UConn Sea Grant Program. The bill instead includes, as voting members, the DoAg, DECD, and DEEP commissioners and the Sea Grant Program's director, or their designees.

Under the bill, various authorities appoint the remaining nine members, who must meet specified qualifications. The below table compares the appointments under the bill with those under current law.

### Connecticut Seafood Development Council Appointments

Appointing Authority	Current Law	The Bill
Governor	One freshwater fish producer	One freshwater finfish producer
House speaker	One finfish, shellfish, or lobster harvester or harvester organization representative	One aquaculture finfish producer
House majority leader	One finfish, shellfish, or lobster harvester or harvester organization representative	One commercial marine finfish harvester
House minority leader	One finfish, shellfish, or lobster processor or processor organization representative	One commercial lobster harvester
Senate president pro tempore	One retailer who serves restaurants or represents a restaurant organization	One small scale aquaculture producer
Senate majority leader	One member-at-large	One seaweed aquaculture producer
Senate minority leader	One finfish, shellfish, or lobster processor or processor organization representative	One shellfish harvester
DoAg commissioner	None	One shellfish wholesale dealer

Connecticut Restaurant Association	None	One representative of the association
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The bill requires the DoAg commissioner or his designee to serve as council chairperson.

By law, the council may use federal, state, or other funds and may enter into contracts to carry out its purposes. The bill specifically allows the council to receive state, federal, or municipal funds and funds from any nonprofit or nongovernmental organization and spend those funds to perform its duties. It also allows the council to seek funding for and provide financial support to organizations for activities directly related to seafood production and related products.

#### **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 31    Nay 1    (02/26/2021)