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**Denise Raap**  
**First Selectman, Town of Litchfield**  
**Before the**  
**Environment Committee**  
**February 10, 2021**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of **HB-6384, AN ACT CONCERNING AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES' EFFECTS ON LAKES AND RELATED FUNDING.**

In 2019, Connecticut adopted legislation establishing an Aquatic Invasive Species Stamp Program to generate funding to assist towns and the state Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) in preventing and responding to aquatic invasive species that are impairing the water quality in our lakes.

This legislation was supported by organizations such as the Bantam Lake Protective Association to help address growing concerns regarding aquatic invasive species that threaten the quality of lakes and other water bodies across the state. Watermilfoil, fanwort and other invasive species have created serious issues in Bantam Lake, which the Association has been working tirelessly to address.

Bantam Lake is a very important part of our community because it provides residents and visitors with wonderful recreational opportunities, including swimming, kayaking, paddle boarding and other water sports. By requiring DEEP to report on the Stamp Program, HB-6384 will help determine whether the revenues generated under the program are sufficient to continue to provide grants to lake associations and other organizations to help eradicate aquatic invasive species.

In addition, the bill calls for DEEP to develop recommendations on "additional means for funding projects to control or eradicate aquatic invasive species by municipalities and lake authorities". This will help ensure that eradicating and controlling the spread of aquatic invasive species to protect the quality and integrity of the state's water resources continues to be a priority.

Thank you for the opportunity to support HB-6384.

*Denise Raap*