



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 59

February Session, 2022

Substitute House Bill No. 5143

House of Representatives, March 22, 2022

The Committee on Environment reported through REP. GRESKO of the 121st Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN OFFICE OF AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2022*) There is established within the
2 Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station the Office of Aquatic
3 Invasive Species. The office shall: (1) Coordinate research efforts
4 throughout the state to reduce duplication of effort and costs associated
5 with the control and eradication of aquatic invasive species, (2) serve as
6 a repository for state-wide data on the health of rivers, lakes and ponds
7 in relation to the presence of aquatic invasive species, (3) perform
8 regular surveys on the health and ecological viability of waterways in
9 the state in relation to the presence and threat of aquatic invasive
10 species, (4) educate the public about aquatic invasive plants and efforts
11 the public can take to reduce the impact of such invasive species, (5)
12 advise municipalities on management of aquatic invasive species, (6)
13 serve as a liaison among organizations and state agencies for issues
14 pertaining to the eradication and control of aquatic invasive species,

15 including organizations and agencies such as the Department of Energy
 16 and Environmental Protection, the Department of Agriculture, the
 17 United States Army Corps of Engineers, the Connecticut Federation of
 18 Lakes and Ponds Associations, the United States Fish and Wildlife
 19 Service, municipal inland wetlands commissions, the Connecticut River
 20 Conservancy and councils of governments, and (7) coordinate with the
 21 Invasive Plants Council, established in section 22a-381 of the general
 22 statutes, when undertaking the efforts and responsibilities described in
 23 this section. The board of control for the Connecticut Agricultural
 24 Experiment Station, as described in section 22-79 of the general statutes,
 25 shall determine the staffing of the Office of Aquatic Invasive Species,
 26 within available resources. The office shall not have authority to issue
 27 any permit or fine.

28 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2022*) The Department of Energy and
 29 Environmental Protection, within available resources, shall establish a
 30 public education program concerning the department's "Clean, Drain &
 31 Dry" technique for boaters before leaving a boat launch and install signs
 32 concerning such technique at each state boat launch.

33 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2022*) There is established an account
 34 to be known as the Save Our Waterways account which shall be a
 35 separate, nonlapsing account within the General Fund. Moneys in such
 36 account shall be used to fund efforts to control and eradicate aquatic
 37 invasive species throughout the state. Such account shall contain all
 38 moneys required by law to be deposited in such account. Such account
 39 may receive funds from private or public sources, including, but not
 40 limited to, any municipal government or the federal government.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 1, "United States" was inserted before "Army", for clarity.

ENV *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 23 \$	FY 24 \$
Ag. Experiment Station	GF - Cost	484,917	349,917
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	365,261	365,261
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	GF - Cost	1,000	None
Ag. Experiment Station	Save Our Waterways Account - Revenue Gain	Potential	Potential

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill establishes, within available resources, an Office of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) in the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES). Establishment of the new office would result in total costs to the state of \$850,178 in FY 23 and \$729,004 in FY 24 for four new full-time and three durational staff. This includes costs of \$484,917 in FY 23 and \$349,917 in FY 24 associated with the new positions (one Assistant Scientist 2, one Post-Doctoral Scientist, and two Technician 1's), plus costs of \$365,261 in both FY 23 and FY 24 for associated fringe benefits.

Additionally, the bill requires the Department of Energy and

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 40.53% of payroll in FY 23.

Environmental Protection (DEEP) to, also within available resources; (1) establish a public education program about its “clean, drain, and dry” boating technique, and (2) install signs about this technique at each state boat launch. As this is current practice, there is no fiscal impact for this requirement. It is also anticipated that there would a minimal one-time cost in FY 23 estimated to be approximately \$1,000 to modify existing signage at the existing 117 boat launches under the bill's provisions.

Lastly, the bill establishes a separate, non-lapsing General Fund account called the “save our waterways account” to receive federal or municipal funds for AIS control and eradication purposes. This may result in revenues into, and costs out of, this newly established account in FY 23 and FY 24 under the provisions outlined above.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation and the amount of revenue and costs borne by the newly established account.

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 5143*****AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN OFFICE OF AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES.*****SUMMARY**

This bill establishes an Office of Aquatic Invasive Species within the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES). The CAES board of control must determine the office's staffing within available resources. The bill enumerates the office's responsibilities (see below), including coordinating research efforts for aquatic invasive species (AIS) control and eradication. However, the bill prohibits the office from issuing permits or fines.

The bill also requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to (1) establish a public education program about its "clean, drain, and dry" technique for boaters to use before leaving a boat launch and (2) install signs about the technique at each state boat launch. Under the bill, DEEP must do these within available resources.

Lastly, the bill establishes a separate, non-lapsing General Fund account called the "save our waterways account" for funding AIS control and eradication efforts in the state. The account (1) may receive funds from private or public sources, including the federal and any municipal government, and (2) must contain all money the law requires to be deposited in it.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

OFFICE OF AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES

Under the bill, the Office of Aquatic Invasive Species must do the following:

1. coordinate research efforts in the state associated with AIS

- control and eradication to reduce duplication of efforts and costs;
- 2. be a repository for statewide data on the health of rivers, lakes, and ponds in relation to the presence of AIS;
- 3. regularly survey the health and ecological viability of the state waterways in relation to the presence and threat of AIS;
- 4. educate the public about aquatic invasive plants and steps the public can take to reduce the plants' impact;
- 5. advise municipalities on AIS management; and
- 6. be a liaison among organizations and state agencies (such as DEEP, Department of Agriculture, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Connecticut Federation of Lakes and Ponds Associations, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, municipal inland wetlands commissions, Connecticut River Conservancy, and councils of governments) for AIS control and eradication issues.

The bill requires the office to coordinate its efforts and responsibilities with the state's Invasive Plants Council. (By law, the Invasive Plants Council, among other things, publishes a list of invasive or potentially invasive plants; researches the control of invasive plants; and educates the public on problems with invasive plants (CGS 22a-381a).)

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 31 Nay 0 (03/04/2022)