

PA10-020

HB5320

| | | |
|-------------|----------------------------|----|
| Environment | 849-851, 1432, 1433, 1451- | 10 |
| House | 694-698 | 5 |
| Senate | 879, 1064-1066 | 4 |
| | | 19 |

H – 1075

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2010**

**VOL.53
PART 3
595 – 894**

rgd/md/gbr
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

100
April 13, 2010

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Have all members voted? Have all members voted?
Please check the board to be sure that your vote has
been properly cast. If so, the machine will be locked
and the Clerk will take a tally. And will the Clerk
please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 5252 as amended by House "A."

Total Number voting 147

Necessary for adoption 74

Those voting Yea 147

Those voting Nay 0

Those absent and not voting 4

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. The bill passes as
amended.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 133.

THE CLERK:

On page 11, Calendar 133, House Bill Number 5320,
AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENFORCEMENT OF PROHIBITED
ACTIONS CONCERNING CERTAIN INVASIVE PLANTS, favorable
report of the Committee on Environment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Roy, you have the floor, sir.

rgd/md/gbr
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

101
April 13, 2010

REP. ROY (119th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I urge acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

The question is acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill. Representative Richard Roy, you have the floor, sir.

REP. ROY (119th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

This bill authorizes conservation officers, special conservation officers and patrolmen appointed by the DEP commissioner to enforce the law against growing, distributing or buying invasive plants.

The penalty for violating the law is a fine of up to \$100 per plant. I move passage.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, Representative.

Will you remark further? Will you care to remark further? Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I also rise in support of the bill. As we have done in years past we have brought

forward recommendations from the invasive plants council. This was one of the recommendations this year, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, sir.

Will you care to remark further? Representative Mary Mushinsky of the 85th, you have the floor, ma'am.

REP. MUSHINSKY (85th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I was planning to call an amendment on this bill, but I've decided not to. In the past the state list of invasive plants was incomplete. It was missing two species that should have been on the list, but were not. And they were being planted on state construction projects, and these plants were ironically enough being paid for to be put in the ground and then being paid for by the taxpayer to pull them out, as they were invasive. And I thought that was a terrible irony and a terrible mistake, and the amendment was going to prohibit this practice.

But there's good news. The industry has said that they will be putting the -- these two invaders on the invasive list in May. They are (inaudible) and

rgd/md/gbr
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

103
April 13, 2010

Japanese barberry. This is a welcome development. If it happens in May, as predicted, it solves the problem and the amendment is not necessary.

So we'll keep an eye on the situation. And I thank the chairmen and the ranking member for their assistance. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, madam.

Will you care to remark further? Will you care to remark further? If not, will staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Members take your seats. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call. Members to the chamber. The House is taking a roll call vote. Members to the chamber, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Please check the board to be sure that your vote is properly cast. And if so, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally. And will the Clerk please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 5320.

rgd/md/gbr
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

104
April 13, 2010

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Total Number voting | 147 |
| Necessary for adoption | 74 |
| Those voting Yea | 147 |
| Those voting Nay | 0 |
| Those absent and not voting | 4 |

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. And the bill passes.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 24.

THE CLERK:

On page 4, Calendar 24, substitute for House Bill Number 5014, AN ACT CONCERNING AUTOMOBILE AND PERSONAL RISK INSURANCE, favorable report by the Committee on Insurance.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Steve Fontana, you have the floor, sir.

REP. FONTANA (87th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I move for acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

The question is acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill. Representative Fontana, you have the floor.

S - 600

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2010**

**VOL. 53
PART 3
618 - 932**

cd
SENATE

33
April 21, 2010

Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar 374, House Bill Number 5225, Mr.

President, move to refer this item to the Committee on
Energy and Technology.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar 375, House Bill Number 5320, Mr.

President, move to place this item on the consent
calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar 376, House Bill Number 5254, Mr.

President, move to refer this item to the Committee on
Finance, Revenue and Bonding.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar 377, PR; Calendar 378, PR; Calendar 379
is marked go; Calendar 380, House Bill Number 5452,

S - 601

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2010**

**VOL. 53
PART 4
933 - 1266**

cd
SENATE

218
April 21, 2010

Bill 5265; Calendar 313, substitute for House Bill 5002.

Calendar page 20, Calendar 314, House Bill 5201.

Calendar page 24, Calendar 340, substitute for Senate Bill 175.

Calendar page 25, Calendar 346, substitute for Senate Bill 151; Calendar 350, Senate Bill 333; Calendar 371, substitute for House Bill 5014.

Calendar page 26, Calendar 375, House Bill 5320.

Calendar page 27, Calendar 379, substitute for House Bill 5278; Calendar 380, substitute for House Bill 5452; Calendar 381, substitute for House Bill 5006; Calendar 382, House Bill 5157.

Calendar page 28, Calendar 384, substitute for House Bill 5204.

Calendar page 29, Calendar 395, substitute for Senate Bill 127; Calendar 396, Senate Bill 147.

Calendar page 30, Calendar 413, House Bill 5024; Calendar 414, substitute for House Bill 5401.

Calendar page 31, Calendar 419, substitute for House Bill 5303.

Calendar 32 -- page 32, Calendar Number 421, substitute for House Bill 5388; and on calendar page 34, Calendar 46, substitute for Senate Bill 68;

cd
SENATE

219
April 21, 2010

Calendar 50, substitute for Senate Bill 17.

Calendar page 35, Calendar 64, substitute for
Senate Bill 187.

Calendar page 37, Calendar 109, substitute for
Senate Bill 189.

Calendar page 39, Calendar Number 148, substitute
for Senate Bill 226.

Calendar page 40, Calendar 182, substitute for
Senate Bill 218.

Calendar page 41, Calendar 188, substitute for
Senate Bill 200.

Mr. President, that completes those items placed
on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

All right. If the Clerk has made an announcement
that a roll call vote is in progress in the Senate on
the first consent calendar, the machine will be open.
Senators may cast their vote.

THE CLERK:

The Senate is now voting by roll call on the
consent calendar. Will all Senators please return to
the chamber. The Senate is now voting by roll call on
the consent calendar. Will all Senators please return
to the chamber.

cd
SENATE

220
April 21, 2010

THE CHAIR:

Would all Senators please check the roll call board to make certain that your vote is properly recorded. If all Senators have voted and if all votes are properly recorded, the machine will be locked, and the Clerk may take a tally.

THE CLERK:

Motion is on adoption of Consent Calendar Number 1.

| | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Total Number Voting | 35 |
| Those voting Yea | 35 |
| Those voting Nay | 0 |
| Those absent and not voting | 1 |

THE CHAIR:

Consent Calendar Number 1 is passed.

Are there any announcements or points of personal privilege? Are there any announcements or points of personal privilege?

Senator LeBeau.

SENATOR LEBEAU:

Thank you, Mr. President, for a -- for an announcement.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**ENVIRONMENT
PART 3
659 – 995**

2010

your district?

SENATOR KISSEL: Absolutely. There's a certain area in Enfield in particular that -- Enfield borders the Connecticut River -- that is just famous for the fishing that's available there, and actually we've worked with federal authorities because it's a little tricky. You have to cross the train tracks, and there has been a little bit of an issue with Amtrak.

There are huge amounts of areas in north central Connecticut that are famous for the fishing that's available and, quite frankly, we are way out of line with our bordering states. So, you know, Enfield borders the Connecticut River; it also borders Massachusetts. Why would you want to fish in Connecticut if you can just go a few miles up the road and fish in Massachusetts?

So, I actually think being in a border community, quite often even if you reduce the dollar amount of what you're charging, you will make that up in volume, and so I think at the end of the day if you really crunch the numbers with fiscal analysis, we may be in the same spot even if we reduce the overall dollar amount because we're going to get a lot more volume, so, Senator Meyer, I appreciate that question. You're exactly correct.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any other questions or comments from the members of the Committee? Seeing none, Senator, thank you very much.

SENATOR KISSEL: Thank you, gentlemen.

REP. ROY: Commissioner Prelli followed by Karl Wagener.

F. PHILIP PRELLI: Good morning, Senator Meyer,

HB 5320
SB 126
SB 274

Representative Roy, and Members of the Environment Committee.

I'm here to testify on three bills, and the first one I'd like to testify on, I'm actually doing the testimony for the Chairman of the Invasive Plants Council, Dr. Mary Musgrave, who is not able to be with us today, but as Vice Chairman of that Committee, I would like to just bring in her testimony, and I believe you all have copies of that.

The Invasive Plants Council was established and operates pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 22a-381 through 22a-381d and has the following responsibilities: Developing and conducting initiatives to educate the public about problems created by invasive plants in lakes, forest and other natural habitats; publishing and updating a list of invasive or potentially invasive plants; and supporting state agencies in conducting research into invasive plant control.

There are nine appointed members who work in the government, the nursery industry and environmental groups, and I happen to serve as Vice Chairman of that group. Much of the time spent by the Council has been devoted to discussing how the current law can be implemented. Inspection roles of both my department and the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station are now clearly described by legislation. This year's bill, Number 5320, is critical because it gives conservation officers the power to enforce the state's Invasive Plant laws. The enforcement piece will be especially helpful in preventing the spread of aquatic invasive plants from waterway to waterway, and I hope that you take the opportunity to read her testimony in full.

Again, this bill is very important to the invasive plants because we're concerned about the movement of those plants mainly via boats and trailers.

The second bill I'd like to testify on -- and I'm doing this now as Commissioner of Agriculture, not the Invasive Plants Council -- is Raised Bill 126, and it's an act concerning adding wood smoke to the public health nuisance code and concerning outdoor wood-burning furnaces.

Our interpretation of this proposed legislation leads us to believe that this would not apply to those engaged in agricultural pursuits. The question comes that the bill is somewhat questionable in its writing on whether the time frame would apply to agriculture.

The Department is of the opinion that a few bad actors have caused a great deal of concern about these needed technologies. Nothing in this section -- again, it's the time frame. We believe that looking at regulations of smoke stack height, proper fuel sources and grandfathering in old wood-burning furnaces for a period of time would address these problems.

The third bill -- and probably where most likely testimony is -- is Raised Bill 274, an act prohibiting the unreasonable tethering -- unreasonable confinement and tethering of dogs.

I'm here this morning to emphasize the serious concerns the Department of Agriculture has with this, the proposed bill. There are many points in this bill that no one would disagree with. Everyone wants to make sure that a dog

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**ENVIRONMENT
PART 5
1346 – 1678**

2010



Connecticut Association of Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions, Inc.

deKoven House Community Center
27 Washington Street
Middletown, CT 06457
860 344-8321
www.caciwc.org

TESTIMONY TO THE CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING Monday March 8, 2010

The Connecticut Association of Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions, Inc (CACIWC) is pleased to submit testimony today on the following three bills:

S.B. 123 AN ACT CONCERNING PRESERVING NATURAL VEGETATION NEAR WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES.

S.B. 205 AN ACT CONCERNING ENHANCEMENTS TO THE INLAND WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES ACT.

H.B. 5320 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENFORCEMENT OF PROHIBITED ACTIONS CONCERNING CERTAIN INVASIVE PLANTS.

CACIWC appreciates the Committee's decision to hold a public hearing today on these bills and offers the following comments to assist the committee in their deliberations:

S.B. 123 AN ACT CONCERNING PRESERVING NATURAL VEGETATION NEAR WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES

The Connecticut Association of Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions, Inc (CACIWC) strongly supports efforts to preserve natural vegetation found at the perimeter of wetlands and watercourses. A growing body of scientific evidence supports the essential role that these natural plant communities provide in stabilizing land, preserving soil function and permeability, along with maintaining balanced hydrologic inputs to the wetlands and watercourses. By providing shade to the adjacent watercourses, these communities help modulate water temperature, and serve to preserve populations of trout, salmon and other important aquatic life. These riparian ecosystems are themselves a source of rich biodiversity and serve as an important rest area of numerous migrating species.

Rivers are second only to our coastline as Connecticut's most valuable natural features. The billions of federal and state dollars already spent to clean up our major rivers and Long Island Sound provide testimony to our historic commitment to preserving these important resources. The continued presence of existing vegetative buffers serves as a natural filter to intercept and transform non-point source pollutants before these substances are able to contaminate aquatic environments. These riverside vegetative communities and wetland systems also provide natural flood control, helping to preserve our homes, businesses, and other infrastructure. Moreover, these existing vegetative buffers provide an often unappreciated, but important, aesthetic quality to our streams and riverbanks that help define the unique characteristics of our great state.

The CACIWC Board of Directors understands that the Environment Committee will be considering a major substitute language change to the proposed bill, as drafted. During the last few sessions, the CACIWC Board has reviewed numerous draft language options proposed for the versions of this bill. While most of the proposals contained language that would enhance efforts to preserve natural vegetation communities, some language may have inadvertently placed unnecessary burdens on our member commissions and staff.

We, therefore, propose that an Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Act advisory committee be formed to review any substitute language in the final proposed bill. The committee should consist of representatives of: CACIWC and its members, the DEP Inland Water Resources Division, environmental groups involved in drafting language, along with representatives of the regulated community such as the Connecticut Business and Industry Association. Recommendations should also be made for development of expanded DEP training programs to prepare municipal commissions and staff to implement proposed changes.

S.B. 205 AN ACT CONCERNING ENHANCEMENTS TO THE INLAND WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES ACT.

The CACIWC Board has also reviewed several draft language options proposed for the previous and current versions of this bill. CACIWC supports the goal and intended purpose of this bill to augment the scope of evidence considered by inland wetlands agencies in evaluating permit applications, but questions whether the proposed language is necessary to achieve this goal. The CACIWC Board understands that the Environment Committee will be also considering substitute language change to this proposed bill, in the area of promoting increased training of municipal wetlands commissions and agents. CACIWC strongly supports increased municipal training and further suggests that the aforementioned wetlands act advisory committee be charged with examining language proposed for this bill

HB. 5320 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENFORCEMENT OF PROHIBITED ACTIONS CONCERNING CERTAIN INVASIVE PLANTS.

A major focus of CACIWC's education and outreach efforts has been promoting the identification and control of invasive plants by municipal conservation commissions and their agents and partners. Additional efforts to control invasive plant species are needed to reverse their continued adverse impact on native plant species and Connecticut's natural biodiversity. CACIWC strongly supports HB 5320 as it will expand the pool of law enforcement officers authorized to enforce invasive plant laws and regulations.

CACIWC is a non-profit organization working to protect Connecticut's wetlands and watercourses and other natural resources through information and education of the 2000+ volunteers and staff that carry out the responsibilities of Connecticut's Conservation Commissions and Inland Wetlands Commissions. CACIWC, representing over 200 member commissions, works with municipalities and environmental groups to promote public support for the judicious management and conservation of Connecticut's natural resources. For additional information contact Alan Siniscalchi, President, or visit www.caciwc.org.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



Public Hearing – March 8, 2010
 Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Amey W. Marrella
 Department of Environmental Protection

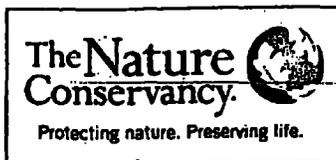
Raised House Bill No. 5320 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENFORCEMENT OF PROHIBITED ACTIONS CONCERNING CERTAIN INVASIVE PLANTS

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Raised House Bill No. 5320, AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENFORCEMENT OF PROHIBITED ACTIONS CONCERNING CERTAIN INVASIVE PLANTS. This bill would enable the Department of Environmental Protection's Environmental Conservation (EnCon) Police officers to enforce the provisions of CGS Sec. 22a-381d that prohibit the importation, movement, sale, purchase, transplant, cultivation or distribution of eighty invasive plants in Connecticut. The Department of Environmental Protection (Department) supports this bill, as it would strengthen efforts to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive plant species in Connecticut.

Invasive species are a nationally recognized problem that can directly harm the state's terrestrial and aquatic natural resources, and decrease the recreational, aesthetic and economic values of those resources. Controlling invasive plant populations is very costly and this financial burden is shared by state and federal agencies, municipalities, lake associations and private landowners. Passage of this bill would provide an additional tool to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive plants. Existing law (GGS Sec. 22a-381d) on invasive plants is less effective than it could be due to inadequate enforcement powers. Currently, technical staff from this Department, the Department of Agriculture and the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, do not have the option of calling EnCon Police when they encounter prohibited species. This proposal would address this deficiency.

In summary, the Department supports this bill, as it would assist in preventing the spread of banned invasive plants, limiting habitat degradation and associated financial and ecological costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Department's views on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact the Department's legislative liaison, Robert LaFrance, at (860) 424-3401 or Robert.LaFrance@CT.gov.



**55 High Street
Middletown, Connecticut 06457
860-344-0716 x 317**

**IN SUPPORT OF BILL 5320
AA AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENFORCEMENT OF PROHIBITED ACTIONS
CONCERNING CERTAIN INVASIVE PLANTS.**

**Testimony of David Sutherland - Director of Government Relations
Before the Environment Committee - March 8, 2010**

On behalf of The Nature Conservancy's 28,000 members, I am here today to express our appreciation for the attention that this committee has given to the issue of invasive plants over the past several years, and our support for bill 5320 - AAC the Enforcement of Prohibited Actions Concerning Certain Invasive Plants.

This bill would clarify the authority for DEP's Conservation Officers (CO's) to enforce the statute which prohibits the sale, cultivation or intentional spread of certain invasive plant species. While the statutes currently give the DEP Commissioner broad authority to enforce environmental statutes, the invasive plant statutes are not among those specifically authorized for enforcement by CO's.

To quote from an October 2009 OLR Report, "The agriculture commissioner and the experiment station director may enforce the invasive plant law in specific circumstances. CGS 22-84 and 22-344 (e), as amended by PA 09-52, respectively authorize the (1) director to inspect nurseries and nursery stock and (2) commissioner to inspect pet shops, for violations of the invasive plant laws." It is unclear, therefore, whether any law enforcement officials have clear authority to enforce these laws outside of pet shops and nurseries. Among various possible enforcement agencies, DEP's Conservation Officer corps would have the best access to the type of expertise and the discretion needed to most knowledgeably enforce these provisions.

What's the Problem with Invasive Plants?

Thousands of plants have been introduced to New England over the past few centuries from other regions or continents. Most of them do not present problems for natural habitats. Several dozen of these alien species, however, are a grave threat to forests and other natural areas, because they are able to aggressively out-compete native plants, and are not nearly as valuable for native animals which evolved with those native plants. Instead of a mosaic of many species of native plants and animals, our forests and wetlands become dominated by far fewer species of plants and animals, and therefore less healthy. Many lakes and rivers have become impenetrably clogged with aquatic invasive plants.

(over)

Unlike pollution, invasive plants, once introduced, continue to spread without further human assistance and do not degrade over time. Rare species appear to be particularly vulnerable to changes wrought by non-native invaders, but even relatively common native plants and animals can be driven to near extinction by some invasives.

How are Invasive Plants Spread?

Invasive species are introduced and spread into new areas by many means, including landscaping and the sale of plants between countries and states; inadvertently through the transport of other products; seeds or plant fragments being transported on boats from one water body to another; and by wind, water, and birds.

What Can We Do?

Reducing the spread and impacts of invasive plants will require many different approaches, including physical removal, education of nursery consumers, rapid detection of response to invasions by new species, and restrictions on sale of certain plants. Many municipalities, land trusts, lake associations and other organizations are spending hundreds of thousands of dollars annually to remove or control invasive plants.



**Testimony
Elizabeth Gara
Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA)
Before the
Environment Committee
March 8, 2010**

The Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA) supports HB-5320 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENFORCEMENT OF PROHIBITED ACTIONS CONCERNING CERTAIN INVASIVE PLANTS, which will help strengthen efforts to eradicate invasive plants by authorizing conservation officers to enforce the law.

Every year, the introduction of harmful, non-native species into the U.S. has been increasing. Invasive non-native plants are a concern to the state's water companies because they can grow rapidly, are very prolific and can create permanent and serious problems for the public water supplies that are very costly to mitigate. For example, certain species clog intake valves that impede the flow of water. Other species displace native plants that are important to source water protection efforts.

Strengthening enforcement efforts to help eliminate invasive plant species will ensure that water companies can continue to deliver pure and adequate drinking water supplies to the citizens of the state.

The Connecticut Water Works Association, Inc. (CWWA) is an association of private, municipal and regional public water supply utilities serving more than 500,000 customers, or population of about 2½ million people, located throughout Connecticut.



University of
Connecticut



New England

Invasive Plant Center

To: Committee on Environment, Connecticut General Assembly

From: Mary E. Musgrave

Professor and Head, Department of Plant Science, University of Connecticut
and Chairman, Connecticut Invasive Plants Council
and co-director, New England Invasive Plant Center
Email mary.musgrave@uconn.edu; phone (860) 486-2925

Date: March 8, 2010

Written testimony RE:

Raised Bill No. 5320, "An Act Concerning the Enforcement of Prohibited Actions Concerning Certain Invasive Plants"

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, and other members of the Environment Committee: My name is Mary Musgrave, and I want to thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of Bill No. 5320, "An Act Concerning the Enforcement of Prohibited Actions Concerning Certain Invasive Plants." My purpose today is to explain the reasons the Connecticut Invasive Plants Council recommends adoption of this bill and to encourage your support of the language within it.

The Invasive Plants Council was established and operates pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 22a-381 through 22a-381d and has the following responsibilities: developing and conducting initiatives to educate the public about the problems created by invasive plants in lakes, forests and other natural habitats; publishing and updating a list of invasive or potentially invasive plants; and supporting state agencies in conducting research into invasive plant control, including the development of new non-invasive plant varieties and methods for controlling existing species.

As Chairman of the Invasive Plants Council I represent 9 appointed members who work in the government, the nursery industry, and environmental groups. Much of the time spent by the Council has been devoted to discussing how the current laws can be implemented. Inspection roles for the Dept. of Agriculture (for aquatic plants being sold in pet shops) and CT Agricultural Experiment Station (for plants in nurseries) are now clearly described by legislation. The situation governing inspections for aquatic plants being carried by boats and boat trailers has been less clear. This year's bill, no. 5320, is critical because it gives conservation officers the power to enforce the state's Invasive Plant laws (22a-381 through 22a-381d). This enforcement piece will be especially helpful in preventing the spread of aquatic invasive plants from waterway to waterway.

I would like to thank the Environment Committee for your continued interest in invasive plants as one of many important environmental concerns, and for your support of prior recommendations from the Invasive Plants Council.