
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 6384

AN ACT CONCERNING AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES' EFFECTS ON LAKES AND RELATED FUNDING.

SUMMARY

This bill provides for a longer six-foot draw down period of Lake Beseck in odd-numbered years. It requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to enter into an agreement with Middlefield and the Lake Beseck Association about the lake's annual water level draw down by November 1, 2021.

By law, in odd-numbered years, the six-foot draw down must be achieved by November 1. The bill requires the draw down to be maintained until January 31, instead of December 31 as under current law.

The bill also requires DEEP to report to the Environment Committee by October 1, 2021, on the (1) amount of revenue collected from the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) fee and (2) number, value, and purpose of any grants to municipalities and nonprofit organizations from the Connecticut Lakes, Rivers and Ponds Preservation account (see BACKGROUND). DEEP may also report on recommendations for additional ways to fund municipalities' and lake authorities' AIS control or eradication projects.

The bill requires the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) commissioner to give the DEEP commissioner any information necessary for DEEP to complete its AIS report.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2021, except the DEEP reporting requirement is effective upon passage.

BACKGROUND

Aquatic Invasive Species Fee

By law, owners of registered vessels (i.e., generally, any type of watercraft except a seaplane) must pay an annual AIS fee. The fee is \$5 for in-state vessels (payable to DMV when registering a vessel) and \$20 for out-of-state vessels (payable to DEEP) (CGS § 14-21bb). DMV and DEEP must deposit all AIS fee proceeds in the Connecticut Lakes, Rivers and Ponds Preservation account. DEEP must use the account for various purposes, including allocating grants to state and municipal agencies and nonprofit organizations to conduct research and provide public education on managing state lakes, rivers, and ponds (CGS § 14-21aa).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 33 Nay 0 (03/12/2021)