

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 23-155—HB 6813
Environment Committee

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SEABIRD AND SHOREBIRD PROTECTION PROGRAM

SUMMARY: This act (1) allows the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) commissioner to establish a seabird and shorebird protection program under which she may designate and identify protected areas on state-owned public property within the state’s coastal area (i.e., the coastline along Long Island Sound) and (2) makes it an infraction to disturb these areas.

The act authorizes the commissioner to create a list of birds to be protected. The list must include seabirds and shorebirds identified in state regulations as endangered, threatened, or of special concern.

Under the act, the commissioner may designate seabird and shorebird protection areas on state-owned public property along the state’s coastal area for any period from March 1 to September 15 each year. The commissioner must identify each protected area with string fencing, posts, and signs, and may have volunteers or her agents help install these.

The act prohibits people from doing the following:

1. entering an identified protected area without the DEEP commissioner’s authorization;
2. allowing a pet or other animal under their control, except for a service animal, from coming within 25 feet of an identified protected area; and
3. operating a vehicle or bicycle within 25 feet of an identified protected area.

Under the act, a person commits a separate infraction for each violation. The act authorizes DEEP-appointed conservation officers and other officers who can serve criminal process to enforce its provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2023