

This letter is for the consideration of the House Municipal Government and Housing Committee Members,

I fully support bill H 7060.

I live in Tiverton, Rhode Island and I was drawn to live here by the natural beauty and the wildlife that is abundant in this area. As a fisherman and a human being terribly concerned about the environment I am disturbed to hear that an oyster farm is being considered at Seapowet. I have heard that reports were made which stated that it isn't really a recreational area and that "no one fishes there". In order to witness the fishing that takes place here one would have to understand the nature of fishing and the habits of the larger fish. Did these "researchers" come at night when the fish we (myself and a number of other fishermen) seek are more likely to be present because the phytoplankton rise in the evening, attracting the baitfish the bass and bluefish feed on? Have they ever witnessed the feeding frenzy that happens at sunset precisely where the Bowens wish to place their oyster farm? The menhadden populations have been ravished by the commercial fishing industry. These growing fish rely on the baitfish that are plentiful in this location.

Many people eat the clams and crabs that inhabit Seapowet. The waters that wash over this site flow under the Seapowet bridge and into the canals beyond. This area also has a delicate balance of life. The mussels, crabs and baitfish found here feed countless sea and land birds. From my window I can clearly see the canals. I watch the deer gather to eat the clean grasses. The turkeys mate here in the spring and the migrating birds gather here to rest and eat. I have counted as many as 72 Egrets gathered at once to dine on the shellfish that sustains them. Can we risk polluting these waters, vital to so much life, just so people can feed on farmed oysters and some one can turn a profit? This bill is so important. We must preserve these delicate areas. We who frequent them cherish them not just for recreation but also for their natural beauty. Please, pass this bill. Save this place for our children and for the health of the planet.

I would be happy to testify under oath that all of the above is true if it would help to pass this bill.

Thank you

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