

Environment Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-55

AN ACT CONCERNING THE CARE, MAINTENANCE AND BOATING SEASON
Title: FOR WYASSUP LAKE IN NORTH STONINGTON.

Vote Date: 3/14/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference to Appropriations

PH Date: 1/31/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Environment Committee

Co-Sponsors:

Sen. Heather S. Somers, 18th Dist.

Rep. Greg S. Howard, 43rd Dist.

Rep. Aundre Bumgardner, 41st Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

Many residents on Wyassup Lake in North Stonington would like to extent the waterskiing season for three more weeks into September to enjoy recreational waterskiing.

Substitute Language LCO 6227 the substitute language replaced the underlying bill, which would have required DEEP to adopt regulations to increase the boating speed limit during the summer months.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Katie S. Dykes, Commissioner, CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection

DEEP supports the concept of SB 55 but needs additional clarity. Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies Section 14-121-B16 currently limit boating speeds and other activities on Wyassup Lake. This regulation includes a boat speed limit of 8 mph for most of the year. The exception is from June 15 to the first Sunday following Labor Day speeds an exceed 8 mph between 11:00am to 6:00 pm. Public complaints from recreation uses and lakefront homeowners about boat speeds are enforced through no-wake zones in hazardous or high traffic areas rather than by specific speed limits. If this bill passes, DEEP will need to seek increase in the speed limit through the regulatory process and the outcome will be bound by passage of the proposed regulations through the Legislative Regulation Review Committee.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**Rep. Greg S. Howard, State Representative 43rd District**

Rep. Howard would like SB 55 to be amended to include that anytime a survey is required by DEEP for the maintenance of Wyassup Lake that the State of CT, through DEEP, provide the survey, or the funding for such survey. Wyassup is a public lake that includes a state boat ramp. The residents Association take on the financial burden of maintaining the lake but sometimes controlling the weeds, a survey is required.

John M. Laabs, President Lake Wyassup Improvement Association

Mr. Laab sent in testimony requesting the extension of waterskiing season. He states it will not change the character of the lake or have a fiscal impact on small business or to the municipality or the State. At their annual meeting most residents supported this change. They also have the backing of the First Selectman Bob Carlson and from the Director of Boating, Yulanda Cooling. They just want to extend family recreation.

115 Residential Members of the Lake Wyassup Improvement Association and their Families sent in Testimony in favor of SB 55 to extend the waterskiing season 3 weeks for family recreation.**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:****Vilma Gregoropoulos, Property Owner on Wyassup Lake**

Ms. Gregoropoulos opposes SB 55 because she states that motor boating is harmful to the environment by causing destruction of banks, noise pollution, and disturbance of the underwater environment. The fall bird migration runs from August 15th till November 15th. Extending the season would interfere with these birds.

13 Residents sent in Testimony in Opposition to SB 55 because of noise, destruction of the environment and interfering with the bird migration.

Reported by: Judy Ganswindt

Date: March 26, 2025