



General Assembly

**Amendment**

January Session, 2025

LCO No. 9615



Offered by:

REP. PARKER, 101<sup>st</sup> Dist.

REP. MUSHINSKY, 85<sup>th</sup> Dist.

To: Subst. House Bill No. **7174**

File No. 686

Cal. No. 426

**"AN ACT CONCERNING RIPARIAN AREAS."**

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and substitute the  
2 following in lieu thereof:

3 "Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a working  
4 group within the legislative branch to identify where and how  
5 protection of vegetated riparian buffers in the state can be incorporated  
6 into statutes and regulations in order to improve the health of and  
7 protect the resources of the state's watercourses, to respond to the  
8 projected impacts on watercourses that are listed in the  
9 recommendations of the Governor's Council on Climate Change and to  
10 meet the goals for the health of Long Island Sound. In undertaking its  
11 work, the working group shall: (1) Review the impact of vegetation  
12 removal and siltation to water quality and quantity in rivers and  
13 streams, and upon fish and wildlife populations, and the health of Long  
14 Island Sound, (2) review riparian buffer protection in other states, (3)  
15 review the roles of local commissions regarding river and stream

16 protection, (4) examine the Department of Energy and Environmental  
17 Protection's resources that are currently dedicated to its Inland Wetland  
18 and Watercourses program, (5) determine implications of existing case  
19 law on the protection of riparian buffers, and (6) make  
20 recommendations to the Department of Energy and Environmental  
21 Protection for any changes to inland wetlands and watercourses  
22 regulations, identify how the protection of vegetated riparian buffers  
23 can be incorporated into statutes and regulations, and make  
24 recommendations for attendant legislation.

25 (b) Not later than thirty days after the effective date of this section,  
26 the cochairpersons of the joint standing committee of the General  
27 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the environment, in  
28 consultation with the ranking members of said committee, shall jointly  
29 select two cochairpersons for such working group. Not later than forty-  
30 five days after the effective date of this section, the cochairpersons of  
31 such working group shall select the membership of such working group  
32 which shall include, but not be limited to: (1) One representative of the  
33 Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the Department  
34 of Transportation and the Office of Policy and Management, (2) a  
35 representative of homebuilders, (3) two representatives of  
36 environmental advocacy organizations working on water-related issues  
37 and climate change, (4) a representative of cold water anglers, (5) two  
38 representatives of municipal inland wetland commissions, (6) a  
39 representative of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning  
40 Association, (7) one representative from a council of governments, (8) a  
41 representative of the water utilities, and (9) a representative of an  
42 organization that represents the marine trades.

43 (c) The cochairpersons of such working group shall convene such  
44 working group not later than sixty days after the effective date of this  
45 section. The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the  
46 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the  
47 environment shall serve as administrative staff of the working group.  
48 Not later than January 15, 2026, the working group shall submit a report

49 on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of  
50 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the  
51 environment, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the  
52 general statutes. The working group shall terminate on the date that it  
53 submits such report on January 15, 2026, whichever is later."

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section