



**For the Transportation Committee
Testimony of Alicea Charamut, Executive Director
January 26, 2021**

**SB 261 AAC RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES
Sections 5 and 6 – Support with modifications**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

Background

SB 261 builds on *PA 18-101: AA Establishing a “Save Our Lakes” Number Plate to Combat Aquatic Invasive Species and Cyanobacteria Blooms* and appears to offer more specific direction in order to expedite implementation of this commemorative plate.

It is essential that our agencies and our communities have resources available to respond to existing and emerging threats from aquatic invasive species (AIS) in all of its waters. Investment in a coordinated effort that includes effective prevention, education, and control in rivers, lakes, and ponds is critical to protecting the ecological and economic value that these waters provide is critical. Having an “opt in” revenue source in the form of a commemorative license plate is an excellent option.

SB 261 also makes necessary corrections to the name of the deposit account following *PA 19-190: AA Requiring an Invasive Species Stamp for the Operation of a Motorboat on the Waters of the State and Enforcement of Noise Ordinances*. Formally called the Connecticut Lakes and Ponds Preservation account, PA 19-190 extended eligibility for use of these funds to rivers. This was a much needed and common-sense measure as neglecting to provide resources and addressing AIS more uniformly in all of our surface waters will ultimately make management in lakes and ponds more challenging – not to mention leaving AIS impairments in our rivers unaddressed.

Modification

I recommend a change in the name of the commemorative license plate to “Save Our Lakes and Rivers” for two reasons:

1. Including rivers more accurately reflects how revenue from the commemorative plate can and will be spent.
2. Including rivers broadens the market of those who would be potentially interested in such a commemorative plate, therefore, increasing revenue.

Rivers Alliance was formed to fight for sound water policies at the state and federal levels, to provide education on water resources, and to advocate for any person or group striving to protect water. If you want clean, free-flowing and healthy rivers, and high-quality drinking water, Rivers Alliance is here to help.