

GOV. MALLOY SPONSORS 'BLUE PLAN' LEGISLATION TO PROTECT THE FUTURE USE OF LONG ISLAND SOUND

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Dannel P. Malloy today announced that, as part of the package of legislative proposals he will introduce later this month, he will sponsor the Long Island Sound [Blue Plan](#) in order to ensure that Connecticut has a coordinated strategy in regards to any potential future use of the Sound.

The [Blue Plan](#) directs the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and UConn to convene relevant state agencies, academic institutions, and stakeholders to compile an inventory of the natural resources and the human resources of the Long Island Sound, and to use that information to develop a plan to guide future uses of the Sound's waters and submerged lands.

“The Long Island Sound is critical for Connecticut's economy and the millions of people who rely on its resources, and yet our state does not have any existing authority to plan for its future use and protection on an overall basis. We need to act now in order to protect our vital coastline, allow comprehensive and regional planning for use of the Sound,” Governor Malloy said. “The Sound has been the scene of several protracted battles over the past decade, which highlights the pressing need for us to take action now.”

The legislation will enhance and expand the work of a bi-state Connecticut/New York working group that has been preparing for spatial planning in the Sound, and enable the resulting inventory to be incorporated into a plan that could ensure future or new uses of the Sound are compatible with traditional uses, minimize conflicts among users, and balance use with resource protection.

The resulting final plan, developed over a multi-year period, will be submitted to the General Assembly for its final approval.

Governor Malloy noted that the surrounding states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island have already developed similar plans for their coastline and waterways and have seen positive impact. New York is currently engaged in a similar process. He said that it is time for Connecticut to enact a similar plan.

“Establishing a [Blue Plan](#) for Long Island Sound is vital to its preservation and the development of job-creating commercial entities along Connecticut's coastline,” said State Senator Ted Kennedy, Jr. (D-Branford), co-chairman of the Environment Committee. “Our shoreline's natural resources will be catalogued and made available, all without spending any additional state dollars. This will be a significant boost to the region, securing the coastline while also providing opportunities for the state's growing aquaculture businesses and other industries.”

“The Long Island Sound [Blue Plan](#) will allow us to gain a wealth of information about the body of water that we share with New York,” said State Representative James Albis (D-East Haven), co-chairman of the Environment Committee. “It will serve as a virtual inventory of resources that the Sound provides. Long Island Sound is an environmental and economic resource for our

state and its residents, and this is a smart and responsible policy that will ensure the viability of those resources.”

“Long Island Sound is central to our economic and emotional well-being and we make more demands on this fragile estuary with every passing year,” said State Representative Lonnie Reed (D-Branford). “Common sense dictates that a comprehensive strategic plan is imperative if we are to wisely manage the many uses of Long Island Sound, be they related to recreation, commerce, energy, tourism, development or coastal resiliency. I am grateful to Governor Malloy for making passage of the LIS [Blue Plan](#) a priority for this legislative session.”

“This [Blue Plan](#) will quite literally become the blue print that will guide Connecticut’s management of what is arguably one of our most important environmental assets – the Long Island Sound,” said State Senator Tony Hwang (R-Fairfield). “I want to thank Governor Malloy for this undertaking and demonstrating the bold and necessary leadership that sends a powerful message that protecting our natural ecosystems is not only good public policy, it’s good for business.”

“Preparing a [Blue Plan](#) for Long Island Sound is about protecting what we cherish and helping sustain a critical, publicly-owned natural resource that, in turn, sustains us all,” said Nathan Frohling, director of coastal and marine initiatives for the Nature Conservancy in Connecticut. “With a [Blue Plan](#), Connecticut can assure new uses of the Sound are compatible with traditional values and resources. We will be able to better balance new uses, while protecting such things as commercial and recreational boating and fishing, the maritime beauty and environmental values that make the Sound such a desirable place.”

Long Island Sound contributes more than \$5.5 million for the local economy. It is home to more than 120 species of finfish and countless varieties of birds and other animals. Between New York and Connecticut, the Sound’s coastline stretches more than 600 miles.

The legislation will be filed along with the Governor’s package of proposals for the 2015 session of the General Assembly.

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