

DODD, LIEBERMAN AND LARSON HELP SECURE \$1 MILLION FOR CONNECTICUT RIVER

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HARTFORD- U.S. Senators Christopher J. Dodd and Joseph I. Lieberman as well as U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) today announced that they were successful in helping to secure one million dollars for sewage pollution control along the Connecticut River. The funding was part of the omnibus budget bill that passed the House of Representatives and U.S. Senate on Friday evening, December 15, and will be used to assist the Hartford Metro Region and the greater Springfield, Massachusetts area in combating combined sewage overflows (CSOs) into the Connecticut River.

"These resources are extraordinarily important to thousands of families and businesses who live and work along the Connecticut River," said Dodd, who spearheaded the effort to designate the Connecticut River as an American Heritage River. "These funds are not only crucial to our efforts to preserve the environment, but also because of our responsibility to protect the public's health."

"This is good news," Lieberman said. "These funds are vital to the health of our waterways and will ensure that sewer overflows no longer pollute our rivers and spoil the precious environment that we enjoy."

"This funding is an important step in recapturing and revitalizing the Connecticut River," said Larson. "It has been designated as an American Heritage River and is an important part of our environment and our future. We must take every step to insure that the River is healthy, and I am very pleased to see that we have this strong support in accomplishing these goals."

The Environmental Protection Agency has mandated that the cities and towns on the river conduct a clean up of the 82 CSOs, at great cost, which has created a heavy financial burden for those cities along the river. The City of Hartford alone will need more than \$100 million in funds to manage the clean-up effort and state funding is not adequate to meet the financial needs of the communities. Springfield would face a total cost of between \$110 and \$140 million, which would raise local sewer rates to an estimated 65%, or \$384 per household. The total cost is expected to exceed \$500 million.

These factors prompted Lieberman, Dodd and Larson to co-sign several letters in support of federal assistance to the cities to Chairmen and Ranking Members on the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees for Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development and Independent Agencies. Senators Edward Kennedy and John Kerry of Massachusetts as well as Congressmen John W. Olver (MA-01) and Richard Neal (MA-02) joined them in signing a September 4th letter supporting this effort.

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