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April 26, 2023

Sen. Christopher Bray ,  
Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy  
Vermont Statehouse  
115 State Street  
Montpelier, Vermont 05633

**Re: Support for H.31, ‘An act relating to aquatic nuisance control’**

Dear Chair Bray and Members of the Senate Natural Resources & Energy Committee:

The undersigned organizations, together as members of the Water Caucus, write to express our support for H.31, an act related to aquatic nuisance control. The bill, as passed by the House, creates a study committee of Legislators and Agency experts on the impact of using pesticides to address aquatic invasive species (AIS). The study committee is charged with making recommendations to update the statute, 10 V.S.A. § 1455 *et seq.*, that allows the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources to issue permits for the use of chemical pesticides in Vermont’s waters to control aquatic invasive species.

We agree with discussions and conclusions in the House that the underlying statute needs thoughtful-proactive reform. In particular, under its existing language, the statute is biased and leans heavily in favor of using chemical pesticides to combat AIS in Vermont waters. We believe that a careful review of the statute that involves experts and legislative policy makers is required to ensure the statute implements the precautionary principle—including a presumption against using pesticides in order to avoid the unknown and unintended impacts of applying chemicals in Vermont’s waters.

Thank you for your consideration and thoughtful attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Vermont Natural Resources Council  
Jon Groveman

Conservation Law Foundation  
Mason Overstreet

Lake Champlain Committee  
Lori Fisher

CT River Valley Chapter Trout Unlimited  
David Deen

Connecticut River Conservancy  
Kathy Urffer

Vermont Conservation Voters  
Lauren Hierl