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Press Release **House Passes Israel, Bishop Bill to Protect Long Island Sound**

Measure Will Reauthorize For Five Years The EPA's Long Island Sound Program

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Reps. Steve Israel (D-NY 2nd), Tim Bishop (D-NY 1st), joined with Rob Simmons (R-CT 2nd) today to applaud the House for passing legislation aimed at improving the water quality of the Long Island Sound.

"As the Co-chair of the Congressional Long Island Sound Caucus, I am pleased the House extended until 2010 the Long Island Sound Restoration Act, which enables the federal government to protect the Sound for generations to come," Israel noted. "Protecting the Long Island Sound should not be a Republican vs. Democrat or Connecticut vs. New York issue and I thank Representatives Bishop and Simmons for joining me on this important legislation and for their ongoing efforts to protect and preserve the Long Island Sound."

"The Long Island Sound estuary is vitally important to our local and regional economy and must be protected," Bishop stated. "I am pleased there continues to be bipartisan support on both sides of the Sound for protecting this natural resource. Now, we need a commitment from Congress to properly fund the Long Island Sound program office so it can live up to the promise of this bill."

"The Long Island Sound is a source of livelihood, nourishment and recreation for many in Connecticut and New York," Simmons added. "And the EPA's Long Island Sound program office plays a significant role in ensuring that the Sound remains a valuable resource to both our states and the nation. Our shoreline communities and maritime enthusiasts will benefit from the continued federal funding toward combating pollution from sewage treatment plans."

The Israel, Bishop, Simmons sponsored legislation authorizes for five additional years the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Long Island Sound program office. The entire Connecticut congressional delegation and seven members of the New York congressional delegation cosponsored it.

The reauthorization allows the federal government to spend \$40 million annually to cleanup the Sound, one of our nation's great natural wonders. With ten percent of the entire U.S. population living within 50 miles its shores, the Sound is a recreational magnet and economic generator for the region. This legislation ensures that we will continue to improve sewage treatment plants that dump waste into the Sound and decrease nitrogen levels in our waters.

Israel and Simmons also authored the "Long Island Sound Stewardship Act (LISSA)." This bipartisan, bicameral legislation would encourage protection of the Sound by providing financial incentives for owners of land parcels within the LIS area to preserve the environmental quality of and public access to this endangered habitat.

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