



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian X. Foley

Senator Foley Repeals Saltwater Fishing License Requirement

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Senator Brian X. Foley (D – Blue Point) announced that the repeal of the saltwater fishing license passed the senate yesterday.

The legislation (S6250) creates a registration system for recreational saltwater fishing which will track the name, address, date of birth and telephone number for each resident engaging in saltwater fishing. Each person who registers with the system will receive an identification number that is unique to him or her. Residents will be able to register for the system via the internet or a telephone number, as provided by the commissioner. This new registry will take the place of the saltwater fishing license that was mandated as part of last year's state budget.

"Today is a great day for recreational fishing in the State of New York," said Senator Foley. "Residents should be able to partake in recreational saltwater fishing without being forced to purchase a license to do so. When this license was created, myself and my colleagues were assured the money collected would be used to benefit the fishermen who were purchasing the license. When that turned out not to be the

case, I immediately introduced legislation to do away with the licensing requirement and create a system that will allow us to meet the federal guidelines without placing an undue burden on our recreational fishermen. I strongly urge the assembly to pass this important piece of legislation so that it can be signed into law as soon as possible so that all New Yorkers, but in particular Long Islanders, can benefit from being able to fish our coastal waters without breaking the bank.”

“This is tremendous news for fishing fans across Long Island,” said United States Senator Charles Schumer. “The bottom line is the current system places far too great a burden on Long Island anglers and charter boats who are already struggling day to day. A total repeal of licensing fee requirements is one step closer to reality thanks to Senator Foley’s efforts. Now we need the Assembly to act immediately to keep fishing free.”

“The New York saltwater license is a broken program built on broken promises, and we’re thankful to Senator Foley for pushing this license repeal through the New York Senate on behalf of our recreational fishing community,” said Jim Hutchinson, Managing Director of the Recreational Fishing Alliance. “We’re halfway there, and if we can now get the Assembly to understand this saltwater user fee is simply another unfair tax with misappropriated funds, perhaps we can see this unreasonable burden on the New York recreational fishing community lifted once and for all. Senate Bill 6250 is a perfect example of how New York can fulfill the federal registry requirements while not forcing onerous constraints on less-fortunate fishermen unable to afford an extra fee to fish the ocean. There is no federal mandate for a state saltwater fee and we thank Mr. Foley for recognizing that fact.”

“Until our state officials can promise New York anglers open access to coastal waters without continued closures to state parks, beaches and fishing seasons, then this license is nothing more than a tax without any returns,” said John Mantione of J&J Sports in Patchogue and spokesman for the New York Fishing Tackle Trades Association. “Look at New Jersey, they have much more liberal fluke limits there and those fisherman aren’t paying any user fees to fish. We would like to thank Senator Foley for supporting the recreational fishing community and working to repeal this needless tax.”

The registry will satisfy the requirements the state must meet under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act, which says they must provide certain background information on individuals who partake in recreational saltwater fishing. States that do not comply with these requirements in

some way must require residents to purchase fishing licenses from the federal government.