



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lee M. Zeldin

## **Senate Passes Budget Bill to Make Saltwater Fishing Free Forever**

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State Senator Lee M. Zeldin (R-C-I, Shirley) today announced that the Senate has passed the portion of the State Budget that permanently eliminates the Saltwater Fishing License Fee.

"The elimination of the Saltwater Fishing License Fee was one of many important priorities for me since taking office in 2011," said Senator Zeldin. "The three year moratorium we secured in the 2011-2012 budget was a big victory for all Long Islanders, but there is no better to build on that success than to permanently eliminate the fee in this year's budget. I am very grateful that Governor Cuomo included the elimination of this fee in his 30 Day Executive Budget Amendment."

Earlier this year, Senator Zeldin and Assemblyman Thiele introduced legislation to permanently eliminate the Salt Water Fishing License Fee (S3709/A4838). The elimination of the Fee is part of a larger budget bill (S.2608-D) that also simplifies, consolidates and reduces the prices of hunting and other fishing licenses.

"I would like to thank not only my Senate colleagues who have worked with me on this goal, but I would also like to thank the thousands of fishermen, including the Recreational Fishing Alliance, NY Sportfishing Federation and Captree Boatmen's Association, who called, wrote, faxed and signed our petition," continued Senator Zeldin. "I also commend Assemblyman Fred Thiele who took the lead in the State Assembly to ensure that the fee was eliminated in this year's budget."

Assemblyman Fred W. Thiele, Jr. (I-D-WF, Sag Harbor) stated, "Fishing in our local oceans, and bays is considered a birth right by our residents that goes back to colonial times. Recreational fishing is a critical sector in New York State's economy. Recreational marine fishing in New York creates \$812 million in sales, directly supports 5,365 jobs, provides \$424 million in value-added economic impact, and \$126 million in tax revenue, according to a 2006 National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) study. Permanent repeal of the saltwater fishing license eliminates this unnecessary burden on this important economic engine as we recover from the worst recession in decades. This is a major victory for Long Island."

"Recreational and commercial saltwater fishing is one of the many great treasures of Long Island," concluded Senator Zeldin. "It's part of our history, and for many, it's a primary reason why we live here. This is a big win for Long Island's saltwater fishermen."

Senator Zeldin will be hosting an event with local saltwater fishermen to commemorate the elimination of the Saltwater Fishing License Fee at the start of the upcoming 2013 fishing season.