



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kenneth P. LaValle

## Senator LaValle and Assemblyman Thiele Pass Legislation to Create A Commercial Fishing Advocate and Commercial Fishing Economic Development Program

KENNETH P. LAVALLE June 17, 2015

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*The new advocate would represent commercial fishermen and promote the business in the State's commercial fishing industry*

Albany, June 17, 2015 – Senator Ken LaValle, (R-Port Jefferson) and Assemblyman Fred W. Thiele, Jr. (I, D, WF-Sag Harbor) announced that legislation they sponsored to create a State Commercial Fishing Advocate and an industry business development program has passed both houses of the legislature.

Senator LaValle said, “The commercial fishing industry is part of the fabric of the East End of Long Island. It’s essential that we ensure that the industry is adequately represented before state agencies and is provided the proper tools to thrive. By creating an advocate, fisherman will have a strong voice to assist in the promotion of the industry, and will be part of state economic development plans.”

Assemblyman Thiele noted, “As elected officials who represents New York’s two largest commercial fishing ports, Montauk and Hampton Bays, we must fight hard to ensure that we maintain and promote our economic engine and backbone. Senator LaValle and I are fighting to keep a viable and productive commercial fishing industry on Long Island.”

The commercial fishing industry in New York State consists mainly of small or family businesses. Currently, there is no State department or office to turn to in helping to provide the assistance they need to promote their business and the overall fishing industry.

As an example, the Department of Environmental Conservation sets rules and regulations related to fishing seasons, sizes, quotas, and gear allowed. However, they do not provide technical, financial or other business related assistance

to help maintain and grow individual businesses nor the entire industry. By establishing the New York State Small Business Commercial Fishing Advocate within the Department of Economic Development, the advocate will help promote the commercial fishing industry, serving as a voice at the table in the regulatory environment, and help to develop new State campaigns to promote all aspects of the fishing industry.

Specifically, the LaValle/Thiele measure ([S5444/A7507](#)) would:

- \* Establish the New York State Small Business Commercial Fishing Advocate within the Department of Economic Development. The Advocate would advise the Commissioner on matters concerning small business commercial fishing and act as a liaison between the industry and the Commissioner. Additionally, the Advocate would be authorized to review current State policies and programs affecting the small business commercial fishing industry, promote the industry in marketing and economic programs in a manner that supports the long-term vitality of the industry in an environmentally sustainable manner.

- \* Create the Small Business Commercial Fishing Economic Development program to enhance and promote the small business commercial fishing industry, provide increased public awareness of these business and provide for the long-term vitality of small businesses engaged in commercial fishing.

- \* Authorize the Advocate to work in cooperation with federal and state entities that regulate the small business commercial fishing industry in an effort further develop programs that promote the long-term viability of these small businesses.

Since the Senate and the Assembly have both approved the legislation, it will be transmitted to the Governor for consideration.