

Massachusetts Seafood Collaborative Testimony – H. 4444

Seafood is a 700-million-dollar industry in Massachusetts. A full 2% of the entire economy, with 5 of our 10 most valuable ports directly on Cape Cod Bay.

In Duxbury, Kingston, and Plymouth Bays, directly where Holtec would dump, there are 50 oyster farms – the largest concentration in the Commonwealth, accounting for the highest value shellfishery in Massachusetts, worth 5.1 million dollars last year.

Dumping one million gallons of radioactive water into our Bay would undoubtedly devastate our industry, and the local economy with it. The perception alone of contaminated water might bring this the Bay State's long shell fishing history to an end.

The risk of nuclear dumping was raised considerably last week as an expert on ocean currents from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution publicly stated that due to the semi-enclosed shape of Cape Cod Bay – as well as Duxbury, Kingston, and Plymouth Bays – anything discharged into the water tends to become trapped, and does not typically exit into the Atlantic, but instead ends up within the sediment on the Bay floor.

the Fukushima nuclear disaster of 2011, of course, was a different nuclear event in type and scale compared with what we are discussing, but it is still instructive.

Seafood was once an 11-billion-dollar industry in Fukushima, but after the disaster, understandably, its value dropped by 93%.

However, a decade later, the waters and marine life around Fukushima have been deemed eminently safe for human use and consumption. Yet despite this, their seafood industry is still

90% below its pre-disaster value. Interviews with Japanese fishermen leave no room for speculation as to why they have not been able to rebound almost at all – perception.

Please pass SD. 4444 as soon as possible to save our ancient maritime traditions, and the thousands of Bay Staters whose livelihoods are at risk.