



**The Brookhaven Town**  
**Democratic Committee**

**NEWS RELEASE**

Contact: Brian Eckhouse, 631-766-5631

**Leonard opposes saltwater fishing license fees**

ROCKY POINT – John Leonard, the Democratic nominee for the Second Council District, announced Wednesday that he supports the efforts by four Suffolk County towns to fight harsh saltwater fishing license fees.

“It is unfortunate that Smithtown and three East End towns have had to seek a temporary restraining order to halt the Department of Environmental Conservation from enforcing an unfair state law requiring saltwater fishing license fees – but it is an action that had to be done,” said Leonard, Brookhaven’s Deputy Supervisor for Constituent Services.

“The fishing industry is one of Long Island’s oldest – and, appropriately, the image of the working mariner still resonates with so many of us. But too often, our leaders overlook the challenges of this industry. We shouldn’t be imposing a tax on those who fish, but trying to help these working families and recreational fishermen thrive.

“And not only does this tax hurt the fishing industry, it discourages commerce. Fishermen from across the Tri-State area who prefer a quiet day at one of our beautiful North Shore beaches may choose to fish on the Jersey Shore or in Connecticut instead. This hurts our already struggling downtowns: People who fish our beaches frequent our bait-and-tackle shops, eat at our downtown restaurants, and buy their gas here.

“Yes, the fishing industry invigorates our struggling economy. So why would government want to pinch them some more? It makes no sense – and that is why I support the litigation against the licenses.”

Tom Farrell, vice president of New York Coalition for Recreational Fishing, thanked Leonard for opposing the fishing licenses.

“John Leonard has again proven that he is a friend to fishermen,” Farrell said. “John understands that people who fish already pay for nighttime access, that we already pay for 4X4 access. John Leonard understands that there are 60 million recreational fishermen nationwide, and that we’ve already paid more than the lion’s share.”

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