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Planning and Development Committee  
February 25, 2007  
Testimony of Martin Mador  
In Support of SB 39 AAC Responsible Growth

I am Martin Mador, 130 Highland Ave., Hamden, CT 06518. I am the Legislative and Political Chair of the Connecticut Sierra Club, and am here today representing our 10,000 Connecticut members concerned about the health of our environment. I possess a Master's of Environmental Management degree from Yale, and serve as a director of several other environmental organizations.

Land use policies have a significant effect on our environment. The principle tenants of what the Governor has come to call "Responsible Growth" will play an important role in land use decisions in the coming years. The Connecticut Sierra Club supports this bill, and urges its passage, but with the enhancements suggested herein.

We praise the Governor for focusing on this issue, and for introducing SB 39. However, the bill has a number of weaknesses which must be addressed for it to have the impact it deserves.

The definition of responsible growth in Section 1 of this bill is too weak. We recommend using that contained in Appendix B of the report of the Responsible Growth Task Force. That provides:

Responsible growth is economic, social, and environmental development that uses land and resources in ways that enhance the long-term quality of life for Connecticut's current and future generations. Responsible growth supports a vibrant and resilient economy and preserves the natural resources upon both of which that quality of life depends. Responsible growth maximizes previous investments in existing infrastructure while preserving distinctive landscapes, historic structures, landmarks, and villages.

Responsible growth requires leadership and governance of the highest caliber to prioritize public decisions in a manner that maximizes the long-term benefits to the state's residents and communities. It demands a collaborative approach to analysis, decision-making, and evaluation between and among all levels of government to ensure consistency with integrated local, regional, and state-wide vision, plans, and strategies.

Secondly, the Responsible Growth Incentive Fund should be funded at a level of \$15,000,000. Providing only one third of that is simply too small an amount.

Finally, the principles here must be applied to funding, planning, and regulatory statutes.

Thank you.