



Farmington River Watershed Association, Inc.

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February 17, 2009

To: The Honorable Members of the State Appropriations Committee

From: Eileen Fielding, Farmington River Watershed Association, 749 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT 06070

RE: Proposed legislation for a Land Value Tax, PSB 379 and PSB 392

On behalf of the Farmington River Watershed Association, I am testifying in support of land value taxation as described in Proposed Bills 379 and 392.

Our organization's mission is the protection, preservation, and restoration of the Farmington River and its watershed. Cost-effective protection of water quality in our rivers requires land use practices that maintain forested lands and other open space, and that minimize the expansion of sprawl and impervious surfaces. We believe that this legislation could help reduce the rate of development outside city limits, thus reducing impacts on the landscape that affect water quality.

We also have a stake in vibrant, economically healthy cities that can afford the costs of rehabilitating urban rivers and retrofitting urban areas with good stormwater management measures. In our watershed, the benefit of such urban renewal would be felt most in the Pequabuck subwatershed, where the city of Bristol faces challenges that these bills are intended to address.

Because of these priorities, we favor a land value tax system that will provide incentives for re-using developed land in cities rather than expanding development into forested lands or other open space, and that will also promote a more robust tax base to support urban areas.

We strongly encourage the adoption of this legislation.

Sincerely,

Eileen Fielding
Executive Director