



HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT, INC.
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February 18, 2009

To: Senator Ed Meyer, Co-Chairman
Representative Richard Roy, Co-Chairman
Members of the Environment Committee

From: Bill Ethier, CAE, Chief Executive Officer

Re: **Proposed Bill 5934, AAC Statutory Training Requirements for Inland Wetlands Commission Members**

The HBA of Connecticut is a professional trade association with almost one thousand, three hundred (1,300) member firms statewide, employing tens of thousands of Connecticut citizens. Our members are residential and commercial builders, land developers, remodelers, general contractors, subcontractors, suppliers and those businesses and professionals that provide services to this diverse industry. We also created and administer the Connecticut Developers Council, a professional forum for the land development industry in the state.

The title of HB 5934 goes to the critical issue that surrounds many of the wetland and watercourse disputes among various advocates today. That is, local inland wetland and watercourse agency (IWWA) members, all volunteers, elected or appointed to their positions, are for the most part untrained in the law they are charged with implementing, untrained in their own regulations or DEP's model regulations, uneducated about wetland science and technical issues, and completely inexperienced in development applications and even the basics of adequately reviewing plans and documentation placed before them.

The one sentence proposal, unfortunately, does not even approach living up to the bill's title. Stating on the record whether the very minimal training requirement under current law has been met is, with all due respect, a meaningless exercise. What the legislature should do is greatly enhance the training requirements for all IWWA members. If a bill is proposed that accomplishes that necessary task, we would request, as a substantial component of the regulated sector, to be included in such an endeavor and would be happy to offer our assistance in drafting such a bill.

Thank you for considering our comments on this legislation.