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*The Voice of the Connecticut Forest Products Industry*

March 12, 2010

**Testimony in support of:**

**R.B. 5420: AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSITION FROM THE TEN MIL PROGRAM IN 2011**

Submitted by: Joan Nichols – President CT Professional Timber Producers Association, Inc.

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Senator Meyer, Representative Roy and members of the Environment Committee:

Thousands of acres of Connecticut forest land held in private ownership under the 10 mill program will be receiving significant tax increases in 2011. R.B. 5420 will provide a window of opportunity for these forest landowners to transition from the 10 mill program to PA 490 without penalty from October 1, 2010 to October 1, 2011. The bill also allows forest landowners to enter into a conservation easement without penalty as well. The new assessment for 10 mill land is slated to come out significantly higher than the current PA 490 current land use value.

Almost eighty percent of Connecticut forest land is held in private ownership. The significant increase in tax bills to thousands of acres of forest land in 2011 threatens to push more of this precious resource into development. Connecticut cannot afford to lose this valuable natural resource base due to the inability of landowners to afford their taxes. The option to convert from 10 mill to PA 490 will assure that this land continues to be taxed at its current use and will help preserve and protect these thousands of acres of private forest land.

Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association urges the adoption of R.B. 5420 to protect working family forest lands and the benefit they provide to all Connecticut citizens.