

CONNECTICUT MARINE TRADES ASSOCIATION

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Environment Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: S.B. No.123 AN ACT CONCERNING PRESERVING NATURAL VEGETATION NEAR WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES.

Chairmen Meyer and Roy;

Distinguished Chairmen and Members of the Environment Committee, the Connecticut Marine Trades Association (CMTA) and their membership urge you to not support S.B. No.123 AN ACT CONCERNING PRESERVING NATURAL VEGETATION NEAR WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES. This bill would prevent the removal of natural vegetation from a property within 100 feet from a wetland or a watercourse. This prohibition would amount to a taking and as such is extreme, unwarranted and delegating too much authority to a local or municipal commission. The potential benefits are far outweighed by the excessive intrusion onto personal property.

Connecticut is not a virgin territory, untouched by mankind or commercialism, as may be found in this country's Northwest States. This state has reportedly been clear-cut three times in the past two hundred years and has evidence of man's progress and growth everywhere you look. Old growth trees are a rarity and most land contours have been shaped by man time and time again. The proliferation of New England stonewalls is evidence of old pasture and farm land that had every tree and shrub stripped away for crop raising or animal grazing. Prohibiting vegetation removal will have little or no impact on the remaining watercourses and wetlands, many of which have actually been formed by the activities of man. Most coastal wetlands were a by-product of railroad embankment construction so it actually might be too late or improper to consider them completely inviolate.

The greater argument against this bill is the excessive authority being delegated to local commissions. We urge you to not support S.B. No.123 AN ACT CONCERNING PRESERVING NATURAL VEGETATION NEAR WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES. It goes too far in trying to control what a person may do on their own property. We would be pleased to discuss this at any time. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue.

Sincerely,

John S. Johnson
Legislative Chair

Grant W. Westerson
President