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TESTIMONY SUBMITTED ON MY BEHALF TO THE PUBLIC HEARING OF THE
COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT MARCH 12, 2010

HOUSE BILL 5420, AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSITION FROM THE TEN
MIL PROGRAM IN 2011.

I wish to go on record in support of this bill since it will give owners of forest classified under the 10 Mill Law the opportunity to transfer their classification without penalty to the PA 490 Program.

The bill would allow this action to be taken by landowners who sell their land or donate their land for conservation purposes between October 1, 2011 and October 1, 2011 without penalty.

I have worked with and for private forestland owners in Connecticut for 30 years. Current-use taxation of forestland is an absolutely essential tool for conserving open space and working forests in our state. These forests constitute a green infrastructure that is the backbone of Connecticut's rural character and economy. Connecticut's private forest owners provide an array of public benefits including clean air, clean water, wildlife habitat, recreation and wood products.

Those landowners with land currently under the 10 Mill Law have kept their land forested for nearly 50 years. There needs to be a mechanism that permits these owners to sustain this remarkable record in perpetuity.

I strongly support the passage of HB 5420.

Daniel F. Donahue