

March 14, 2011

Senator Gayle S. Slossberg  
Representative Russell A. Morin  
Government, Administration and Elections Committee  
Room 2200, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford , CT 06106gaemail@cga.ct.gov  
re: Proposed Bill 1196

Dear Senator Slossburg, Representative Morin,

Please accept this letter as an endorsement for Section 14 of the above proposed legislation.

As I understand the proposal we, the citizens of Connecticut, are being asked to trade a piece of industrially zoned land abutting, to the west, a restaurant/conference center and the DPW garage and storage yard and on the east side by an active railroad leasing property owned by the Connecticut DEP for an amount of forest land to be attached to an existing state forest which would provide an additional point of contact for the public where the property connects to an existing improved public road.

Nowhere in the proposal does the state “give away”, at any price, land along the Connecticut River.

This can only be seen as a positive action likely to create community investment; an expansion of the local tax base; an expansion, with private money, of our tourism industry; an improved access to existing woodland park areas. Development of this type can only improve the ability of residents and visitors to access the Connecticut River and its’ immediate surroundings. Where’s the beef?

I hope the proposal gets some airing in public with people in addition to those owning property along the DEP holdings. Any objective observer would approve this in a heartbeat.

In addition, please ask questions regarding the amount of money paid to a private party who was the prior owner of the parcel in question. I understand there is a recent evaluation of the land which is nearly 90% less than the amount paid. At any rate, it appears that the slick handling of the land deal was perpetrated by the DEP and the former owner of the land, not by those presently involved in trying to develop it.

I am very sorry that illness prevents me from reading this letter into the record. The words, herein, should make clear my opinion. I am not speaking on behalf of any committee or company or organization (see list below).

Very truly

*W. Lee Osborne*

W. Lee Osborne  
172 Washington Street  
Middletown, CT

Secretary, Midstate Regional Planning Authority  
Former Chairman, Middletown P & Z,  
Former Vice Chair, Essex Planning Commission,  
Former Chairman, Killingworth Planning Zoning Commission  
Board Member I-91 TIA, CT State Transportation Strategy Board  
Board of Directors, Valley Railroad, Essex Steam Train & Riverboat  
2010 "Citizen of the Year, Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce  
Vice Chairman, Rockfall Foundation