

*Frank C. DeFelice
32 Cherry Lane
Durham, Connecticut 06422
Telephone: 860-690-2400
fcdefelice@aol.com*

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Environment Committee
Room 3200
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Opposition to Raised Bill No. 347: An Act Concerning The State's Open Space Plan

Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee,

I am writing **in opposition** to Raised Bill 347 entitled “*An Act Concerning The State's Open Space Plan*”. As a member of both the Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission and the Planning & Zoning Commission in the Town of Durham, Connecticut, I feel compelled to offer comment on the potential impact of this bill.

First, the requirements in this bill would result in an unfunded mandate for our municipalities.

Second, this bill fails to recognize what many municipalities have come to realize: **Open Space is not free; even when it is granted or gifted**. It must be maintained and insured. When granted as part of an application for development, the municipality typically receives the most undesirable portions of the total parcel. For these reasons, many municipalities now look to receive a **Fee-in-Lieu of Open Space**, rather than take deeded possession of the land itself. The fees received are typically used to cover the cost of continued maintenance for a town's current Open Spaces.

Thank you for your time and consideration of the above points.

Sincerely,

Frank C. DeFelice