

Via Email env.testimony@cga.ct.gov

Environment Committee
Public Hearing
Friday, March 8, 2013
Testimony in Support of Re: HB-6539
An Act Concerning the former Sunrise Resort Property

My name is Delano Peckham and I am here to support Raised House Bill 6539. I am a past chairman of the Connecticut Valley Shoreline Visitors Council. The Visitors Council included all of Middlesex County and several surrounding towns. Sunrise Resort was one of our prime attractions. Events held there such as the Great Connecticut Jazz Festival, the BMW Rally and others brought thousands of people to the area. The proximity of Sunrise Resort, Gillette Castle State Park and the Goodspeed Opera House made this part of the state an extraordinary tourist destination. Tourism is an important part of the state's economy with each tourist dollar having a strong multiplier effect. The economic benefit to the state and towns is additional tax revenue, employment and business activity.

The Sunrise Resort property is surrounded by thousands of acres of public land including the Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge, the Salmon River State Forest, Hurd State Park, George D. Seymour State Park and the Machimoodus State Park. These public areas, combined with Sunrise, the Goodspeed and Gillette Castle enhance and expand an already extraordinary tourist destination. Sale of this property would downgrade the attractiveness of the area for tourism.

I urge you to support Raised House Bill 6539 without including the possibility of selling the property. It is a rare opportunity when we can improve the economy while protecting the environment.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

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