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Planning and Development Committee
Room 2100, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Support for HB-5242: An Act Expanding Fee In-Lieu-Of Open Space Programs

Dear Senators and Representatives,

My name is Frank C. DeFelice, and I am a Planning & Zoning Commissioner and Certified Inland Wetland & Watercourses Commissioner in the Town of Durham, Connecticut. I wanted to communicate my thoughts on the aforementioned bill to you.

I urge you to support *HB-5242: An Act Expanding Fee In-Lieu-Of Open Space Programs*. This bill would allow towns the option of utilizing "Fee-in-Lieu-of-Open Space" payments to purchase more desirable, contiguous parcels of open space; rather than be granted slivers of disassociated undesirable land.

Furthermore, this bill acknowledges what many municipalities have come to realize: *Open Space is not free; even when it is granted or gifted*. Many of these parcels require maintenance; such as the periodic mowing of grasses, the painting of barns or accessory structures, fence repairs, or the installation of directional or safety signboards. This bill would help municipalities offset the costs associated with these items.

Finally, this bill would allow municipalities to use these fees for the construction and maintenance of sidewalks; making our communities more walk-able, our Main Streets more vibrant and our pedestrians safer.

I urge you to **support** this bill.

Respectfully,

Frank C. DeFelice