



Connecticut Department of
**ENERGY &
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Public Hearing – March 22, 2013
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Daniel C. Esty

COMMITTEE HOUSE BILL NO. 5830 - AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN "ADOPT-A-PARK" PROGRAM

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of COMMITTEE HOUSE BILL NO. 5830 - AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN "ADOPT-A-PARK" PROGRAM. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) offers the following testimony.

Connecticut State Parks rely on a wide range of volunteer and other support to provide the high quality outdoor recreation experience that our citizens have come to expect at our parks. These include a great number of volunteers. The most significant example of this volunteer effort is the network of 24 "Friends of" state parks that have formed over the years to provide support to their local parks. These efforts include thousands of person-hours of volunteer labor to host special events, care for gardens, run gift shops, and perform an endless array of other tasks. These groups also provide significant financial donations to support to the operation of the parks that cannot be accomplished with existing state resources. In addition to these focused Friends Groups contributions, we also enjoy the support of many other organizations that volunteer for specific projects at our parks, including corporations, various civic groups, Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, and many others.

DEEP certainly wants to encourage additional support for our State Parks, particularly during this State Park Centennial Year. We would be happy to work with the proponents of this legislation to help craft a program that best advances the goal of providing additional support and volunteer opportunities for our State Parks.

Thank you for the opportunity to present DEEP's views on this proposal. If you should require any additional information please contact DEEP's legislative liaison, Robert LaFrance, at (860) 424-3401 or Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov .