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State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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Environmental Committee Public Hearing

Wednesday, February 19, 2014

Testimony in Support of,

**Raised S.B. 70, AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESERVATION OF LANDS UNDER
THE CONTROL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

Honored Chairs, Ranking Members and Member of the Environmental Committee

I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for raising Senate Bill 70 and I offer the following testimony in favor of this proposal.

The citizens of Connecticut value our state parks and forests and want them to be protected in perpetuity. Millions have been spent to acquire land for conservation but unfortunately much of this land is not truly protected. Therefore, I strongly urge you to support Senate Bill 70.

This Bill classifies lands under the custody and control of the Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection and the Dept. of Agriculture as "land of high conservation value" unless the commissioners make a written determination to the contrary. Furthermore, this Bill requires DEEP and DOAG to place a conservation restriction on the deeds of lands of high conservation value. This ensures that previously "protected" land will not later be used for alternative purposes. Indeed, these efforts go a long way towards making the state land conveyance process more transparent and emphasizes that it is a policy of the state to preserve these lands and their resource values.

It is my hope that we can come together to protect Connecticut's open spaces and woodlands so as to preserve the natural beauty and rural character of towns throughout the state. Only through these initiatives can our state's rural areas obtain the true protection they need for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration and please support SB 70.

Prasad Srinivasan, State Representative, 31st District