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Testimony Regarding Raised S.B. 271
To the Committee on Government Administration and Elections
Submitted by: Amy Blaymore Paterson, Esq., Executive Director
March 3, 2014

Chairmen Musto and Jutila and Members of the Committee on Government Administration & Elections:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) with respect to **Raised S.B. 271, An Act Concerning the State's Authority to Purchase and to Receive Donations of Real Property.**

CLCC works with land trusts (now numbering over 137), other conservation and advocacy organizations, government entities and landowners to increase the pace, quality, scale and permanency of land conservation in Connecticut while assuring the perpetual, high quality stewardship of conserved lands in the state.

CLCC has been studying the issue of state lands protection for over two years, working with several conservation organizations and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) on a strategy to identify, prioritize and permanently protect lands valuable for conservation purposes in accordance with PA 12-152, and to ensure that there is a process to provide an opportunity for public input before such state lands are exchanged, sold or otherwise conveyed.

To that end, CLCC respectfully contends that it would be helpful to include the following modifications of the provisions of S.B. 271 related to the state's acquisition and divestiture of real property through donation or purchase:

1. A requirement that upon acquisition, the subject real property (or interest therein, as provided in the bill) be evaluated for its conservation, recreational and agricultural values consistent with the provisions of PA 12-152;
2. Clarification that the written acknowledgement of a gift of the subject real property (or interest therein, as provided in the bill) include confirmation of the donative intent for the use of such property; and
3. Clarification of or reference to the process by which such real property is to be exchanged or otherwise disposed of by the state, which provides the public with notice and an opportunity to comment.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.