



# Connecticut Greenways Council

c/o Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection  
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[www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/](http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/)

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**RE: HB 5370** An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Program Review and Investigations Committee Concerning the Performance of Connecticut's State Parks; & **HB 5369** An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Program Review and Investigations Committee Concerning Certain Fiscal and Resource Related Matters Pertaining to State Parks.

Dear Sen. John Kissel, Rep. Mary Mushinski, Sen. John Fonfara, Rep. Christie Carpino, and esteemed members of the Program Review and Investigations Committee:

On behalf of the Connecticut Greenways Council I would like to speak in support of two Bills, HB 5370 and HB 5369. It is readily apparent that many of our State Parks are falling into disrepair. Given the reality that personnel and operational budgets continue to fall precipitously at our State Parks it makes sense to reallocate the fees that such parks collect back to cover their own precarious budgetary needs and out of the General Fund.

We recognize that there are flaws in both HB 5370 and HB 5369, mostly related to process and the added work associated with compliance with these proposed Bills. Our contention is that the good intent of these propositions far outweighs these factors.

Greenways are used by hundreds of thousands of people a year in Connecticut. Many, and the most heavily used, are essentially linear parks, and while predominantly owned by the state, are maintained by the individual municipalities they run through, backed by a coalition of volunteer advocacy groups and individuals. These repurposed rail corridors are retained as improved community open space. They are used as recreational facilities for physical activity and health, as tourist destinations and sources of economic development, as an abatement of pollution and noise by replacing automobile trips, as significant regional amenities where people congregate and interact, and as a growing form of alternative transportation through commutation. Intermodal opportunities through connections with bus lines and other mass transportation are expanding and are slowly and steadily increasing in use.

The vast majority of greenways in Connecticut have had to boot-strap their maintenance with a cobbled-together municipal and volunteer advocate coalition. Our established State Parks should not have to resort to such measures. Please consider the reallocation of funds to these most public exemplars of our State.

Sincerely,

R. Bruce Donald  
Chairman, CT Greenways Council