

## Szabo, Todd

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**From:** PAUL CAPOTOSTO <pcapotosto@snet.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 16, 2014 10:19 AM  
**To:** envtestimony; Rep. Ritter, Elizabeth; Senator Stillman  
**Cc:** ehammerling@ctwoodlands.org  
**Subject:** Please support Bill 70

Representative Elizabeth Ritter and Senator Andrea Stillman

I love our State Parks and Forests and believe they deserve to be protected in perpetuity; and I strongly support **Bill 70** raised by the Environment Committee.

I have seen the media coverage of the report "**Preserved But Maybe Not: the Impermanence of State Conservation Lands**" published in January by the CT Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). This report states eloquently that our public lands are not protected and makes several recommendations (including the consideration of a Constitutional Amendment similar to New York's). CFPA strongly supports CEQ's recommendations and shares the goal of permanently protecting Connecticut's public treasures.

A Constitutional Amendment would be the strongest level of protection for State lands but it will take years of concerted education and advocacy efforts to achieve. **Fortunately, Raised Bill 70 can make an important impact this year and should be supported.** If passed in its current form, Raised Bill 70 would do the following:

- Classify lands under the custody and control of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the Department of Agriculture as "land of high conservation value" unless the Commissioners make a written determination to the contrary.
- Clarify that it is the policy of the State to preserve these lands and their resource values.
- Require DEEP and DoAg to place a conservation restriction (including options such as a conservation easement) on the deed for lands of high conservation value.
- Make the state land conveyance process more transparent.

Please support this Bill 70

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