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CGA Environment Committee

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Support For:

HB 5686: AAC THE APPROVAL OF LAND SWAPS

Comments submitted by Carolyn Bayne, Natural Resources Director, LWVCT

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut is a non-partisan statewide organization comprised of 1600 members in 27 local chapters who are committed to effective public policy and the active participation of citizens in their government.

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut supports House Bill No. 5686 which would set forth detailed requirements for approval of exchanges of land under the care, custody or control of the Commissioners of Energy and Environmental Protection and Agriculture, including notice of, and the opportunity for, a public hearing.

The League has long supported policies and procedures that promote comprehensive long-range planning for conservation and development of both the state's land and water resources. In so doing, the League has advocated for measures that ensure the preservation and protection of inland wetlands and water courses, tidal wetlands, flood hazard areas, watershed lands, open space, and existing agricultural lands, including those that are tilled, pasture, or forests.

The League further believes that opportunities for citizen participation in decisions concerning land and water resources should be provided. Public hearings on the conveyance or exchange of state land are vital for furthering both a sense of open government and the conservation of public lands.

The League, therefore, supports HB 5686 and urges its passage.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer our comments on this important piece of legislation.