

Committee on Government Administration and Elections

Public Testimony

RE: Proposed Bill No. 6998: *An Act Concerning the Conveyance of Certain Parcels of State Land*

Submitted by: Ashley Nelson

March 13, 2015

My name is Ashley Nelson and I am writing in opposition of section 3 of HB 6998: *An Act Concerning the Conveyance of Certain Parcels of State Land*. Specifically, I oppose the state giving four acres of Silver Sands to the city of Milford.

My great grandmother was a resident of the Silver Sands beach community on East Broadway for over thirty years until her house was declared condemned by hurricane Sandy in 2012. The state park, its history, and its status as a wildlife preserve have always been important to me and my family. My father and his brothers were raised by my great grandmother and grew up there. Growing up, my sister and I would frequently visit, and lived there for several summers. I have very fond memories of my father teaching us about the local wildlife (sand pipers, herons, and deer) and how the park was named (the shiny mica in the sand).

Although my sister and I didn't live there full time, we were very close to the community and understood community issues: mainly resident parking issues during the summer and hurricanes. While HB 6998 seems to aid these issues, it does so at the expense of 4 acres of state park land. I urge the committee and the town of Milford to reconsider solutions to these issues.

Silver sands has a history of industrialization. It was a beach community until a hurricane in the 1950s and then became a dump until the late 1970s. If you take a walk on the boardwalk, you can still see remnants of the trash dump and old roads. Since the 1990s, state money and efforts worked to clean the area and restore it to its natural state. Reducing the area of this wildlife preserve will negate the state's previous and current efforts to restore the land, including millions of dollars spent on rehabilitation work.

Thank you for your consideration.