

## Gaetano, Carolyn

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**From:** hb\_nelson@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2015 11:28 AM  
**To:** GAETestimony  
**Subject:** Conveyance Act (HB 6998) Section 3 - Silver Sands State Park

My name is Helen Nelson and I am a resident of West Haven, Connecticut. I have a B.S. in Environmental Science and I have grown up at Silver Sands Beach in Milford, CT.

My family owned a house on East Broadway for over 35 years. My greatest memories are the hustle-bustle of East Broadway in the middle of the summer. I know the only public parking is at E. Broadway, but I couldn't imagine a summer without the mad dash for the parking spaces, or bargaining with a beach-goer for their space as they're leaving. To me, it brought everyone closer together and created a place where everyone interacted. East Broadway is the small town feel of Silver Sands State Park, because locals know that's the place to park to enter the beach. If a new parking lot is constructed at Silver Sands, this will take away the small town feel of Silver Sands, and potentially take away business from the small shops on East Broadway.

The state park has many habitats to offer the area. It has our temperate forest habitat, wetlands, and intertidal zones. It even offers one of the world's unique tombolo (the sandbar that appears at low tide). It even houses many important bird populations as a stopover habitat for migrating shorebirds and provides valuable resources for other sensitive species. Over the years, I've spend countless hours examining these beautiful habitats. If part of the State Park were transferred to the city, it would create a precedent that would potentially open up transfer of state lands state-wide, harming habitats and organisms not just at Silver Sands, but all over the state.

Yes, convenience is increased with this project, but at what cost? Those who don't want to pay the state park fee for access will try their luck at E. Broadway. Those who can't afford the parking fee will take the bus to the beach. And those who want the convenience, will pay the state park fee which helps to manage and protect the state park and its habitats and organisms.

The cost really is the sensitive balance of our coastal habitats. because after the parking lot is established, the balance cannot be restored. I urge you to consider the harsh consequences of this decision. Is it worth taking away from the E. Broadway community? Is it worth taking away from our sensitive coastal habitats? Is it worth allowing this transfer of lands if it ends in paving over a beautiful place? It is not.

I urge you to leave the small town, natural atmosphere the Milford beaches have always upheld and deny this land transfer and parking lot construction.

Thank you for your time,  
Helen Nelson