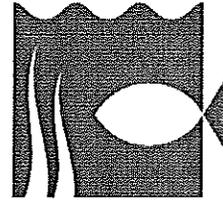


**Connecticut Fund
for the Environment**



Save the Sound[®]
A program of
Connecticut Fund for the Environment

**Testimony of Connecticut Fund for the Environment
Before the Government Administration and Elections Committee**

***In opposition to HB 6998, AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONVEYANCE OF CERTAIN
PARCELS OF STATE LAND***

Submitted by Zachary Bestor
Legal Fellow / Attorney
March 16, 2015

Connecticut Fund for the Environment ("CFE") is a non-profit environmental organization with over 5,500 members statewide. The mission of CFE, and its bi-state program Save the Sound, is to protect and improve the land, air, and water of Connecticut and Long Island Sound. We use legal and scientific expertise and bring people together to achieve results that benefit our environment for current and future generations.

Dear Senator Cassano, Representative Jutila, and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee:

Connecticut Fund for the Environment submits this testimony in opposition to **HB 6998, An Act Concerning the Conveyance of Certain Parcels of State Land**. If passed, this legislation would facilitate the transfer of state land to municipal and private uses, against the recommendations of, or without consulting with, DEEP, and for little or no compensation.

This bill raises numerous questions and provides little to no reasoning for these proposed transfers, and we believe provides an inadequate basis for which to make an informed decision upon. We begin by generally commenting that each of the proposed conveyances requires far more evaluation of: a) the land's market and conservation value; b) the reason for the conveyance; c) the impact of the conveyance on the conservation of the land, and; d) the environmental impact of the proposed use.

Also, decisions impacting state land with conservation value should be made only after DEEP has had a full opportunity to evaluate and report on the potential impacts of the proposed transfers.

The key things that stand out to us are:

Section 3 would convey three parcels of Silver Sands State Park totaling more than four acres, under the custody of DEEP, to the City of Milford for zero dollars. Silver Sands is one of the state's most beautiful beaches, and has been the beneficiary of millions of dollars of rehabilitation work utilizing state funds over the past few years. We believe that this conveyance is directly in contravention of DEEP's previous actions, and would serve to create city-controlled parking area.

Section 8 would convey roughly 130 acres the Centennial Watershed Forest to the town of Fairfield for zero dollars without apparent analysis or evaluation by DEEP.

For these reasons we oppose this bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

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