

February 13, 2015

To: Government Administration and Elections Committee

Senator Steve Cassano, co-chairman  
Representative Ed Jutila, co-chairman

**I am writing to support SB 382, An Act renaming the Community Investment Account, PA 05-228 and PA 09-3, to the Donald E. Williams, Jr. community investment account.**

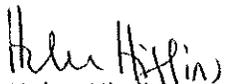
Former Senator Williams not only proposed and shepherded this legislation through in 2005, he has been the consistent defender of the integrity of this off budget funding source ever since.

Senator Williams's intrepid leadership in protecting the Community Investment Act account has allowed substantial investment in community based projects that encourage sustainable development, historic preservation, affordable housing, open space protection, dairy farming and preservation of farmland. No other fund in Connecticut has had the consistent, long term impact as the Community Investment Act.

The Community Investment Act implements the goals of the State of Connecticut to protect and preserve the beauty and unique character of the state for future generations through a designated funding stream. Funds from the Community Investment Act are used to save farms, preserve historic places and open space, and create affordable housing. The Community Investment Act has helped to sustain the character and strengthen the economy of nearly every town and city in Connecticut.

As of September, 2014, funds The Community Investment Act has funded 894 projects in 157 towns for a total of \$122.5 million given back to Connecticut.

Going forward, Senator Williams's name attached to the account will not only honor a great leader but also will serve as a reminder that we must protect and preserve this independent funding source from being chipped away at by various special interests and/or swept away in budget battles. Protecting and preserving the assets of CT's landscapes and cities is essential to the quality of life in this state.

  
Helen Higgins  
Executive Director