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# CONNECTICUT PRESERVATION ACTION

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*The preservation community's unified voice at the State Capitol since 1980*

Testimony: **APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2015**

Chairman Bye and Chairman Walker, I am Jean King from Watertown and I am here today representing Connecticut Preservation Action. We are a statewide organization of individuals and organizations formed to support historic preservation in Connecticut. Since 1980 we have been the unified advocacy voice of the preservation community at the State Capitol. We know that in Connecticut historic preservation not only retains a sense of place, but is a planning tool for economic re-investment and sustainable development.

Today I am here specifically to urge you not to use funds from the Community Investment Act (CIA) to make up deficits in the current year budget. CIA is a dedicated fund created by the Legislature and specifically supporting historic preservation, agriculture, open space preservation, and housing in our state. It is recognized as one of the best pieces of community development legislation that you have ever created in our state.

In the past decade, this fund has directed more than \$133 million toward preserving and reusing historic buildings and sites, saving hundreds of farms and supporting agriculture programs, saving fields and forests from development, and building much-needed affordable housing. These programs have leveraged private investment and created jobs in virtually every community in the state.

In funding the CIA funded through a fee on real estate transactions, the Legislature in 2005 recognized the connection between real estate transactions and preservation of affordable housing, open space, farmland and our historic architecture. They saw the logic in having land record fees support these real estate related purposes. These dedicated funds are not covered by the spending cap. Taking these funds for general budget deficits, thus changing the way this money is spent, would deny our towns the benefit of funds collected locally for programs designed to help those same towns. It would also destroy public confidence in creating dedicated funds for specific purposes. To quote the Hartford Courant, "These dedicated funds were created with separate funding streams apart from the regular budget so that the money would be there in tough times. They are in effect trust funds for particular purposes that the legislature has deemed important. To raid them for other purposes is to violate the public trust, to make them no-trust funds."

Thank you.

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