

I would like to strongly recommend that you oppose the Governor's proposed bills HB6825, Section 5, and SB946, Section 29, dealing with cutting the budgets of the Open Space and Watershed Lands Acquisition Grant Program and Community Investment Act. The funds from these programs has proved overwhelming in helping along the protection of open space in Connecticut and preserving the farmland which is so strongly needed for the well-being of Ct. citizens. I am part of a group currently acquiring the Strong Farm in Vernon, one of the last working farms in town, and am depending on our current application to the Open Space grant program to make this acquisition possible. We plan to keep this land as working farmland, as it currently is, supplying corn and hay for local farmers who find it difficult to obtain enough land to support their endeavors. Without the state programs, which were intended to be dedicated resources not subject to the whims of yearly budgets, these important programs will not be successful. The Northern Ct Land Trust, for which I am a Director and long time supporter, has been able to acquire and protect over 1400 acres in Vernon, Ellington, Somers, Stafford, Enfield, and East Windsor, much of which was directly impacted with funds from the open space grant program. It has been successful, and needs to be continued!

Thanks for your support.

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