

I am writing to oppose Section 5 of HB 6825 which would remove \$10 million from DEEP's Open Space grants.

Governor Malloy made it a goal of his administration to see that at least 21% of the state is protected open space, and just two years later he is proposing to gut the budget that will help do that.

This is a vital program in an agency that has already been severely crippled by the State's merging it and adjusting it and trying to somehow convince the public that "energy" and "environmental protection" are a perfectly matched set of departmental components.

I understand that there are tens if not hundreds of worthwhile programs this year that are under the Governor's knife—programs that cannot protest cuts as loudly as, say, former governors and state probation department officials who are currently in prison and still receive pensions from taxpayers. But when land is gone, it's gone. I have no illusions that this money will ever be put back into the budget, the state's plans for Keno saving the day notwithstanding.

There is so much actual waste and corruption at the state level that the proposed CIA removal amount--\$15,000,000—could be saved many times over if those in charge of eliminating high-level mismanagement, incompetence and sloth would grit their teeth, prepare for the onslaught of indignant how-could-you lawsuits, and cull these people from every state department.

But if that's just my civilian fantasy, then at least do the right thing and do not eliminate open space funding. It is, literally, the last place we can go.

Thank you for your time.

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