

Dear Madams and Sirs:

I am writing to voice my opposition to the proposed diversion of \$15.2 million from the Community Investment Act funds, which would remove \$10 million from DEEP's open space grants program, as proposed in HB 6825, the Governor's Deficiency Bill. This would cripple DEEP's ability to provide open space funding to land trusts and municipalities over the next couple of years.

I live in Fairfield County, one of the most congested areas of the state. Without grants like those provided by DEEP, there would be no respite from the overcrowding, constant traffic, overwhelming sprawl, and out of control construction in our area. The rest of the state faces similar challenges. Open space funding has allowed cities like Norwalk to create greenbelts and river trails, hiking paths and pockets of green space. This is essential to each local community's health and well being, and such spaces encourage more healthful living, which in turn saves money for the state.

While I acknowledge we face real fiscal challenges, this is not the way to address them. Open space is a necessity for Connecticut, helping to promote exercise, recreation, and ecological conservation. It is essential to the sustained and mindful growth of our state. Please consider my testimony in making your decision to oppose this harmful bill and the associated sweeps of funding in the governor's budget. Thank you for your consideration.

Grace Pisano
Norwalk, CT

The "Governor's Deficiency Bill" ([Section 5 of HB 6825](#)) proposed an immediate sweep of \$15.2 million from the Community Investment Act (CIA) funds including \$10 million from DEEP's open space grants program for this year. This cut could put funding in jeopardy for DEEP to be able to give open space grants to land trusts and municipalities over the next 2 years.

The damage from this sweep proposed in the Deficiency Bill would be magnified by the current Governor's Budget proposal ([SB 946, Section 29\(b\)](#)) which proposes a complete sweep of all CIA funds from January 1, 2016 through the end of the current budget cycle on June 30, 2017. We are also strongly opposed to that sweep in the Governor's Budget.

What can you do?

The Appropriations Committee is having a **Public Hearing on Tuesday, April 21st**.

Please make sure your voice is heard by submitting your testimony to the Committee making it clear that you "OPPOSE the diversion of \$15.2 million from the Community Investment Act as proposed in HB 6825, the Governor's Deficiency Bill." Feel free to include something personal about what having protected open space for recreation, wildlife, spiritual renewal, respite, etc. means to you personally.