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AppTestimony
Please protect CT Natural assets by voting against plans to divert CIA funding

This letter is to ask you to take action to protect and expand the natural environment in CT. Please oppose diversion of Community Investment Act funds.

CT depends on its strong appeal to attract businesses, residents and visitors who are willing to pay a little more on living and commuting expenses compared to other less desirable locales. The rich natural beauty; generally clean, healthy surroundings and easy access to outdoor recreation are very strong components of that appeal.

UConn's Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis (CCEA) found that outdoor activities on state lands have an economic benefit of more than $1 billion a year and 9,000 jobs. The study also documented that for every dollar the state spends on the state park system, it receives a return of $38 in economic activity.

But there are far more extensive indirect benefits. The CT environment is a key part of what defines life in CT and protecting it is fundamental to keeping CT attractive. My husband and I are both skilled professionals and have actively considered opportunities to relocate. It is the quality of life in CT that has kept us here and outdoor recreation is a key part of that.

Fiscal prudence is very important. However, CT will never be the lowest cost state. Fiscal prudence for CT requires that we maintain our strong appeal. And that appeal includes a highly enjoyable great outdoors.

Please vote and lobby your colleagues to protect CT appeal by maintaining the funding needed to support the natural appeal CT offers.

And please vote against plans to divert funds from the CIA so that more open space can be protected.

Cate Rauch

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