SAVE THE LAND
'ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY

WEANTINOGE
HERITAGE LAND TRUST

Directors

Hiram P. Williams, Jr.
President
South Kent

Kirsten Peckerman
Vice President
Washington

Jim Millstein
Treasurer
South Kent

Helen Lillis
Secretary
New Milford

Christine A. Flynn
Recording Secretary
Bridgewater

Linda Allard
Washington

Anne H. Bass
South Kent

David De Luca
New Milford

Gregory Heyman
Washington

Ben Nickoll
New Preston

Staff

Catherine Rawson
Executive Director

Paul Elconin
Director of Land Conservation

Rebecca McKay Steinberg
Assistant Director of Land Conservation

Kirsten Pratt Marino
Director of Development

P.O. Box 821
5 Maple Street
Kent, CT 06757
(860) 927-1927
fax (860) 927-1928
www.weantinoge.org

Printed on recycled paper.

To: Governor Daniel Malloy, State Senators, and State Representatives

From: Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust, Inc.

Re: Comments on **S.B. 946 Section 29** Governor's Budget and **H.B. 6825** Governor's Deficiency Bill

Dear Governor Malloy, Senators, and Representatives,

I am writing to voice opposition to the proposed sweeps of Community Investment Act (CIA) funds from their intended purpose in order to balance the Fiscal Year 2015-16 and 2016-17 State budgets. I also oppose the proposed $10 million sweep of current Fiscal Year CIA funds.

The Community Investment Act is a unique funding source which benefits all corners of Connecticut and many thousands of State residents. The CIA has funded 1100 projects in 165 towns for a total of $133 million given back to Connecticut. CIA projects have created over 3,000 jobs in affordable housing and historic preservation. The $873 million outdoor recreation industry and the $3.5 billion dollar agricultural industry, which together generate 28,000 jobs, are strengthened by CIA investments in local farm businesses and land protection. Finally, the CIA requires matching funds—CIA investments leverage millions of matching funds (200% in private, federal and local sources invested back into our communities). The CIA is a bipartisan highly successful funding source which brings in to the State many more funds than what are spent.

Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust is the largest land trust in Connecticut and the 18th largest in the United States. Weantinoge protects over 9000 acres of land in Connecticut and our work supports working farms, outdoor recreation, water quality preservation, and habitat enhancement. Our working region—Litchfield County—has directly benefitted from the Community Investment Act through the Open Space & Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program, Historic Preservation grants, Farmland Protection grants, and investments in affordable housing. Litchfield County, home to the Housatonic River and a thriving tourism industry, would suffer if funds from the act are swept away from their intended purpose.

We strongly encourage you to leave the CIA funds where they are intended to be—as investments in Connecticut's jobs, farms, clean water, forests, and communities.

Sincerely,

Paul Elconin
Director of Land Conservation