



Testimony in **Opposition to Raised Senate Bill 946, Section 29**
An act concerning revenue items to implement the Governor's Budget

by
Alicia Sullivan
Connecticut State Director
The Trust for Public Land

Esteemed Chairs and Members of the Finance Revenue and Bonding Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to Raised Senate Bill 946, Section 29, proposing to convert funds from the Community Investment Act Fund (CIA) for general fund use. This provision is extremely detrimental to conservation efforts in our state and will prevent important open space and urban greening projects from ever moving forward. It will also halt progress on farmland preservation, historic properties preservation and affordable housing development, all important programs for which this fund was created, and which rely on the CIA's revenue stream each year to operate effectively.

I am the State Director of The Trust for Public Land, a national conservation organization that works with communities to protect the land and water that keep us healthy, inspired, and connected with nature and each other. We've protected over 6,200 acres in over 40 communities across the state. Our work is accomplished in partnership with municipalities, local land trusts, the federal government and the State of Connecticut, often using CIA funds for our projects. Our most recent victory, protection of 1,000 acres of coastal forest, The Preserve, is a prime example of people working together to conserve the state's most important natural and recreational resources. Though The Preserve did not use CIA funding, it is an example of the type of projects which have benefited from the funding in the past.

- The CIA funding has contributed to a project in nearly every town and city in Connecticut since the creation of the fund in 2005.
- The return of the state's CIA investments is great. The funds are highly leveraged through local, federal, public and private funds, to the tune of 200%.
- The dedication of this revenue stream and the programs that it funds are key to the success of conservation projects. If local land trusts and towns can't rely on grant programs each year, some conservation projects will be forever lost as landowners won't be willing to wait until some future date when funding is available.
- CIA investments also boost our local and state economies through projects that contribute to the state's thriving outdoor recreation industry.