

I am Luane Lange, Chair of the East Lyme CT Historic Properties Commission., presenting this testimony on SB 946, An Act Concerning Revenue Items to Implement the Governor's Budget. (I regretfully cannot attend in person due to a fall in February and ongoing back conditions.)

"Protect Law That Protects State's Legacy." This is the title of a Hartford Courant Editorial, April, 2014. Again, now, in 2015, the Public Act 05-228, to which the editorial refers, is being threatened. The original General Assembly attention in the development of the Community Investment Act was a cooperative effort to protect and preserve the beauty and unique character of our State. For nine years, through millions of dollars of designated local revenues, then processed through the General Fund, this Act has enabled communities to use these funds to support job creation in agriculture, preservation, restoration and construction employment, public access to outdoor recreation, and tourist attractions in our cities and small towns. These local projects include almost all of the Connecticut municipalities. and millions of dollars infused into local economies.

The Courant editorial included the concept of "Place-making," the value of creating housing and protecting local history, land use and landscapes. East Lyme has been part of this. In 2014 it was the fortunate recipient of a matching acquisition grant from the Historic Preservation funds of the Department of Economic and Community Development. Matching local Town funds, financial support of a local organization, and hours of volunteer involvement enabled the purchase of the 1685 Samuel Smith House and seventeen original farming acres. This will be developed as a teaching 1700's farmstead. For towns like ours, this use of funds, originally generated by local Recording Revenues, is what our state needs to continue being about!

Acknowledgement of the value of our State's very special history is important. A "Thank you note" sent to me after a Rotary speech included the following. "Our family is one of the transplants to your State. We picked this town because of its location and school system. Now we can also be assured that it preserves its heritage and is passing records of its historic past on to our children. Thank you."

Connecticut has almost ten years of building a working network for historic understanding and preservation. This is Place-Making. The decimation of an entire program will be almost impossible to replace. A complete funding drain cannot be the answer.