

Testimony in **Support** of **Senate Joint Resolution Number 5**  
with suggested changes

RESOLUTION PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE  
CONSTITUTION CONCERNING THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL  
RESOURCES OF THE STATE.

by Alicia Sullivan  
Connecticut State Director, The Trust for Public Land

Esteemed Chairs and Members of the Environment Committee:

*The Trust for Public Land is a national conservation organization that works with communities to protect the land and water that keeps us healthy, inspired, and connected with nature and each other. In the 30 years that we've been working in Connecticut, we've protected over 7,000 acres in more than 40 communities across the state, in partnership with the DEEP, the federal government, municipalities, land trusts, and landowners. Most recently we've protected The Preserve in Old Saybrook, Essex, and Westbrook and are working to re-activate neighborhood parks in Bridgeport.*

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding SJ5. On behalf of The Trust for Public Land, I support the concept of the resolution proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution concerning the environment and natural resources of the state and request changes be made to the language of the resolution in order to better serve the intended purpose.

Across the state, investments in open space protection, agriculture, trail and park creation and natural resource conservation enhance our quality of life and attract people to live in Connecticut. For years, the public has enjoyed the recreational, health, and economic benefits of public land held by the state for such purposes. Much of this land was donated or purchased for the specific purpose of conservation, agriculture or recreational trail enhancement. When the state is considering a transfer of such land, an open, rigorous, public process should be followed to ensure that lands held in the public trust are not compromised and that their economic and natural resource value is recognized in the transaction. Transfer of land should not be a frequent occurrence, but a carefully selected transaction that occurs to the benefit of the state, the public and our natural resources.

SJ5 should be amended to include:

- a) Lands with recreational and agricultural value, not just conservation value.
- b) A process that would require a local public hearing. Local being defined as, in the area or areas where the proposed transaction would take place.
- c) A requirement that each conveyance proposal be considered in a separate bill by the General Assembly.

Thank you again, for this opportunity to submit testimony on this resolution.