

Constitutional Amendment bill (S.J. 5) Testimony provided by Cate Rauch of Meriden

Thank you for conducting this public hearing and for this opportunity to express my thoughts on the need to better protect Connecticut's public lands and to better serve the standards of good government.

I commend Connecticut's leadership for their hard work to ensure a thriving future for our state.

CT success depends in great measure on its strong appeal to attract businesses, residents and visitors who are seeking a better quality of living 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.

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 and natural beauty are key parts of that.

Last summer's attempts to use the Conveyance Act were a huge disappointment. They were designed to serve very narrow and selfish purposes and relied on tactics tainted with unsavory political manipulations. Those actions detract from the public faith in government and make Connecticut a far less appealing place to live.

The proposed Constitutional Amendment is a vital step to protect CT public land. It is a very important issue which the General Assembly should address.

S.J. 5 should also be improved in the following ways:

- S.J. 5 should be more comprehensive to protect lands that have agricultural, conservation, or recreational value
- S.J. 5 should include a requirement for a local public hearing so that those most familiar can testify
- S.J. 5 should be more comprehensive to include the value of those lands being given away as well as the sale of public lands
- S.J. 5 should address the need to have separate bills considered by the General Assembly for each individual conveyance of public lands with agricultural, conservation, or recreational values to avoid bundling

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 improve and pass Constitutional Amendment bill (S.J. 5)

Sincerely

Cate Rauch
330 Columbus Ave
Meriden, CT 06451
203-235-3986 CateRauch@gmail.com

Cc:

Sen. Bartolomeo
Rep. Santiago
Rep. Sharkey
Rep. Aresimowicz
Sen. Looney
Rep. Klarides
Sen. Duff
Sen. Fasano
Gov. Malloy
Lt Gov. Wyman