

To: Environmental Committee
From: Maria Cruz Kayne
Re: SJ5

Dear Senator Kennedy, Representative Albis and members of the Environmental Committee,

I appreciate this opportunity to submit my testimony in support of the Constitutional Amendment (S J.5) to strengthen protection of Public lands and provide transparency in doing so.

You have already received some vital testimony. I agree most of all to the one sent by a co-director of the CACIWC with me, Ann Beaudin. I second all her points and hope you will consider them seriously.

The only concept/argument which I would like to put forth is that a constitutional amendment like SJ 5 will give town governments and their boards and commissions, the clear model/process to protect town-owned land and open space. Like the State, towns should not sell and trade public land /open space without transparency from the get go or public hearings. Towns and municipalities look to the State for a good guide.

Currently, my town of Woodbridge has been beset by the decision to save or sell a 157+ acres of open space. While there are public hearings, the public has not been allowed to give public testimony or comments.

Our open space, rural community atmosphere defines our town and the process that local government is using to make its decision on this portion of the Town is far from transparent or democratic.

I believe that the S J 5 Constitutional Amendment will help change this process for Woodbridge and any other towns that have a similar problem. I urge you to pass this amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Cruz Kayne, Selectman
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