

This email to the GAE encourages the Committee to amend the State Constitution to better protect CT public lands. It also asks the GAE to vote “NO” on the Conveyance Act in the same public hearing (SJ36).

The amendment to the CT Constitution protects public lands from:

1. Fragmentation and loss of state holdings ecologically valuable, important for healthful outdoor recreation, and necessary for viable farming
2. Landowners are dissuaded from giving property to the state even if their donation contains a deed restriction
3. Waste of state and private resources researching and fighting potential losses
4. Breach of faith with our predecessors efforts to preserve these lands for current and future generations in an ever increasingly urbanized future.

The Conveyance Act on the other hand:

Incorporates languages negating the will of the citizens to protect their public lands, i.e., “Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes ...” This powerful and outrageous language essentially states “we hereby ignore any previous laws that we have passed,” and it would override any legislative changes that might be protective of public lands. A Constitutional Amendment cannot be ignored easily.

The “Conveyance Act” gives the General Assembly the ability to sell, trade, and give away public lands to a town, business, or even an individual. Minor boundary adjustments or transfers of state highway lands to a municipality can be benign; however, the Conveyance Act also proposes giving away sections of State Parks and Forests for no compensation and for non-conservation purposes. This can be done without a public hearing and through late-session amendments.

Please consider the urgency of this email.

Respectfully submitted,

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