

Please protect CT Natural assets with specific Budget requests.

This letter is to ask you to take action to protect and expand the natural environment in CT. Please see specific Budget requests below and please work to protect and improve CT's natural environment.

Please vote and lobby your colleagues on key Budget items:

- [HB 5585](#): To establish a state parks sustainability account for the maintenance and operation of State Parks and fund such account through the diversion of certain funds from unclaimed bottle deposit funds and the Citizens' Election Program.
- [SB 384](#): To apply the bottle bill to wine and liquor containers and designate unclaimed deposit refunds from the sale of such containers for the operation, maintenance, and repair of State Parks.
- [SB 386](#): Requesting CT DEEP to recommend a dollar amount for a per-person admission fee to state parks that will leave the state competitive with surrounding states while generating increased revenues for the maintenance and operation of State Parks.

CT depends on its strong appeal to attract businesses, residents and visitors who are willing to pay a little more on living and commuting expenses 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.

UConn's Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis (CCEA) found that outdoor activities on state lands have an economic benefit of more than \$1 billion a year and 9,000 jobs. The study also documented that for every dollar the state spends on the state park system, it receives a return of \$38 in economic activity.

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 protect CT appeal by maintaining the funding needed to support the natural appeal CT offers.

Sincerely

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