



Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

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Submitted by: Henry N. Talmage, Executive Director, Connecticut Farm Bureau Association, a statewide nonprofit membership organization representing 5,000 families dedicated to farming and the future of Connecticut agriculture.

Senator Cassano, Representative Jutila and members of the Committee on Government Administration and Elections,

S.J. No. 36 -RESOLUTION PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE TO PROTECT CERTAIN PROPERTY HELD OR CONTROLLED BY THE STATE FOR CONSERVATION, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE OR AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES.

The Connecticut Farm Bureau generally supports the concept of making it more difficult for the state to dispose of land or easements that were acquired with specific conservation purposes or programs. However we believe the language contained in S.J. No. 36 is a bit too broad and ambiguous. We believe the first sentence in Sec.19. "State park or forest land, farm land or other real property held by the state in fee or in easement for conservation, recreational, open space or agricultural purposes, may not be sold, transferred to any person or other entity or converted to another use, except following a public hearing conducted by the state agency having custody or control of such property or easement in the town or towns where such property or easement is located by passage of a special act of the general assembly by a yeas vote of at least two-thirds of the membership of each house" should be changed to "State park or forest land, farm land or other real property held by the state in fee or in easement for conservation, recreational, open space or agricultural purposes that was acquired with a specific conservation program or a specific and defined conservation purpose declared at the time of acquisition may not be sold, transferred to any person or other entity or converted to another use, except following a public hearing conducted by the state agency having custody or control of such property or easement in the town or towns where such property or easement is located by passage of a special act of the general assembly by a yeas vote of at least two-thirds of the membership of each house". Without this change virtually any land the state has a real estate interest in and manages for a conservation purpose would require the 2/3 approval to change its use or dispose of even if that land was not originally acquired for a conservation purpose. Therefore we encourage this committee more narrowly define which specific state land or state easements this Constitutional Amendment would apply to and remove the ambiguity of the current language.