

Dear GAE Committee,

One of the best things about living in Connecticut is the close proximity to a variety of public parks and forests. I sincerely believe that our public lands are one of this state's greatest assets. My husband and I, lifelong Connecticut residents, use several nearby state lands regularly for recreation and hunting, and enjoy exploring areas that are new to us. I am always impressed with the number of people using our public lands and am grateful to those people who had the foresight to preserve and protect these properties for future generations. The thought that these lands could be swapped, sold or given away with little or no public input or compensation is appalling. Therefore, I support the principles included in S.J. 36.

Our public lands deserve the added protection that a Constitutional Amendment would provide and I thank the GAE for holding a public hearing on this important issue. Although a Constitutional Amendment could not be ignored easily, S.J. 36 could be strengthened in the following ways:

If a sale, transfer or change of use for public land is proposed, then:

1. **All** expenses associated with the transaction should be borne by the proposed new landholder and not by the state agency currently holding the land in question;
2. The ultimate approval of fair market value should be made by the state agency holding the land in question;
3. Minor administrative boundary adjustments that do not diminish the conservation, open space, recreation or agricultural purposed of the land should be exempted.

I strongly support S.J. 36. Thank you for your time and consideration to this important issue.

Sincerely,

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