

Testimony of Scott Livingston, March, 14 2016
*S.J. 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*

I am Scott Livingston, and I make my home in Bolton. I am married to Deborah and we have two young children. We are a very active outdoor focused family. I support a Constitutional Amendment to protect parks, forests and other state owned conservation, recreational and agricultural lands from being sold, traded or given away by legislative act. Thank you for bringing this excellent resolution to a public hearing.

As a family, we are active members of Team Horst Sports, the Shenipsit Striders, the Silk City Striders, the Appalachian Mountain Club, and the Connecticut Forest & Park Association. We participate in hiking, trail running, mountain biking, road running, road cycling, snowshoeing, and many other outdoor recreation activities. Nature is a very important part of our lives.

A day doesn't go by that we aren't doing something outdoors on public land. We live on the Hop River Linear Trail State Park (rail trail) and in addition to public land, benefit from the generosity of private landowners throughout the state. The 825+ miles of Connecticut Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails are the best example of a system that relies on public/private partnerships.

The General Assembly overstepped with the Haddam land swap and the Conveyance Act is damaging to the public. Our state conservation, recreation, and agricultural lands should be held forever to benefit the people of Connecticut. My children should benefit from what we have today for the rest of their lives.

We need the constitutional amendment to assure that state lands will be protected. I strongly support amending the state constitution to protect these public lands. I will leave suggestions on specific wording changes to those that are studying this more closely.

However, I will reiterate that as a family focused on conservation, outdoor education, and recreation that we need to make these changes to protect and secure this land for the future.