

# CONNECTICUT Land Conservation Council

Testimony on Raised Senate Bill No. 328  
Planning and Development Committee  
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Senator Osten, Representative Miller and Members of the Planning and Development Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) regarding Raised Senate Bill No. 328, An Act Concerning Municipal Applications for Land Use Permits and Tax Abatements (SB328). CLCC supports SB328 with suggested modifications.

As Connecticut's umbrella organization for the land conservation community, the Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) works with the state's land trusts (now numbering 137+), state conservation and advocacy organizations, government entities and landowners to increase the pace, quality, scale and permanency of land conservation in Connecticut while assuring the perpetual, high quality stewardship of conserved lands in the state.

Much of CLCC's work is devoted to meeting with volunteers active in land conservation and environmental protection throughout the state. In doing so, not only do we provide our members with assistance, advice and other services, but we also get to hear about and see the fruits of their hard work and dedication in protecting the natural landscapes that make Connecticut such a special place in which to live and work. These citizens often have the deepest connections with and most intimate knowledge of their towns' natural resources.

The public's active participation in the land use process helps to ensure that a land use commission will receive complete and balanced information before making a significant and final decision on a permit application. These decisions not only obviously impact the land sought to be developed, but also likely affect the surrounding lands and other natural resources. It is therefore critical that citizens have access to as much information as possible in connection with a land use permit application as part of their right to comment and participate in land-use decisions that impact their respective communities.

SB328 would add transparency to the local land use process by requiring clear identification of the intended owner and developer of a property, and its intended use. That said, we would respectfully suggest modifying the language of the bill to: (1) make the disclosure of the information mandatory rather than discretionary; (2) consider making the disclosure of the information a statutory mandate, rather than having it implemented via a local ordinance; (3) define "developer"; and (4) define "reasonable time".

On behalf of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council, I thank you for this opportunity to provide our comments. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

