

To the Planning and Development Committee;

I am writing to urge you to support HB 6926, which would enable municipalities to create a buyer's real estate transfer fee up to 1% on the buyer's purchase price (>\$150,000). I understand that this method of revenue generation for open/public space acquisition and protection has been successful in neighboring states.

Open space protection and acquisition can benefit all of our residents, by ensuring passive and active recreational opportunities, as well as agriculture, for generations to come, and encouraging smart growth without senseless sprawl. Additionally, this undeveloped land helps to recharge and filter groundwater - supplying much of our residents' water supplies, filters particulates and other air pollutants, reduces noise, helps stabilize soils, provides connection between wildlife habitats – in all, helps to hold together the fabric of the environment on which we all depend.

While I believe Middletown to be a leader on open space protection, ours is a modest city, with many financial demands. This is only likely to get worse. Enabling this source of revenue would allow the city to have a conversation about raising money in this manner, and if approved, would provide much needed funding for protection and management. I can see no downside to this enabling legislation.

Sincerely,
Kate Miller

Member, Middletown Conservation Commission