

February 13, 2017

Re: In Support of H.B. No. 6926

Dear Chairman Lemar, Cassano, Logan and Members of the Planning & Development Committee:

I am writing in support of House Bill 6926, An Act Permitting Municipalities to Impose a Buyer's Fee on the Conveyance of Real Property. This bill will positively impact the preservation and protection of open space and parks across our State.

House Bill 6926 is a local option fee that would create a municipal fund for the purchase and stewardship of open space and park in local communities across the state. The legislation is another tool for cities and towns in Connecticut to invest in their community. The enabling legislation would require a city or town to enact a local ordinance to opt-in to the buyer's fee in that community, up to 1% on the purchase of a home.

In my hometown of Meriden, we are fortunate to live in an area surrounded by beautiful and unique trap rock ridges. Local efforts to purchase land to protect these ridglands and reduce the impact of local flooding are vitally important as part of our communities economic develop activities. Having a dedicated, locally-controlled funding stream would help with these efforts.

In a time of State budget constraints and the challenges of the State in meeting it's open space and stewardship goals, this proposal is an essential tool that would allow local communities to harness a dedicated and replenishing revenue stream to protect and steward open space.

As you know, protecting open space is difficult with limited funding from state and federal sources. Open space and parks preserve the character of Connecticut cities and towns. Once open space is lost, it is gone forever. Enacting House Bill 6926 will help to maintain and enhance sustainable communities and increase local investments.

Please empower and enable communities across Connecticut to fund local conservation efforts and preserve the natural beauty and character of our rural, urban and suburban landscape. Please support House Bill 6926.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Radcliffe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "D".

David Radcliffe

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