



*Making Great Communities Happen*

# Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association

## Testimony regarding

### Proposed Bill No. 550— AN ACT CONCERNING GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

CCAPA supports this Proposed Bill. It is our understanding, based on Senator Needleman’s testimony, that the intent of this Bill is to move the State into a leadership position in unifying the scattered and disconnected Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data into a common format and database. This intent reflects core goal of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association’s (CCAPA) “Start With Planning” initiative for moving Connecticut forward over the next decade.

The current decentralized nature of GIS management in Connecticut is untenable, with each of the 169 municipalities, nine Councils of Government, numerous State and Federal agencies, and countless land trusts and other nonprofits, essentially responsible for their own geographic data standards. This is the recipe for poor planning, wasted and duplicative efforts, and a lack of cohesiveness in inter-municipal development and conservation efforts. It is impossible, under this current system, to know authoritatively, how far along we are, as a State, toward our various conservation and open space preservation goals.

Connecticut is a small state with many partners committed to good planning, conservation efforts, and proactive cooperation. Having the State take a leadership role in unifying and coordinating these efforts under a common set of cadastral standards and a common data center – perhaps in cooperation with UConn and the Councils of Government – is a relatively low cost way to facilitate a major step forward for Connecticut. A copy of CCAPA’s white paper on Conservation and GIS from our “Start With Planning” initiative is attached to this testimony, and CCAPA stands ready to help with this effort.

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## WHO WE ARE

The Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association (CCAPA) has over 420 members who are governmental and consulting planners, land use attorneys, citizen planners, and other professionals engaged in planning and managing land use, economic development, housing, transportation, and conservation for local, regional, and State governments, private businesses and other entities. CCAPA has long been committed to assisting the legislature and State agencies with developing and furthering responsible growth management principles. The APA is an independent, not-for-profit, national educational organization that provides leadership in the development of vital communities.

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## CONTACTS

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