

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 775, "An Act Concerning the Creation of the Central Connecticut Loop Trail, Public Hearing Feb 13. Support of HB Senate Bill No. 775, provided by Cate Rauch of Meriden

A PDF of this email is attached for your convenience.

This Testimony is in support of *Senate Bill No. 775*. This bill requires the commissioners of Transportation and Energy and Environmental Protection to fully coordinate the planning, design and construction of a trail starting in East Hampton, where the Air Line Trail begins and continues east, and continuing through Portland, Middletown, Meriden and Cheshire, eventually connecting to the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail, which runs north-south from Suffield to New Haven.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my thoughts on the need to better promote and enjoy Connecticut's environment, open space and quality of life by voting for *Senate Bill No. 775*. It will give the people of Connecticut a chance to take regional action to better promote their local environment and public space. Connecticut's appeal is based in large part on enjoyment of our natural riches. That appeal cuts across Town boundaries just like this Trail, which can be another way of bringing the citizens of diverse Towns closer together.

I commend Connecticut's leadership for their hard work to ensure a thriving future for our state.

CT success depends in great measure on its strong appeal to attract residents and visitors who are seeking a better quality of living compared to other less desirable locales. The rich natural beauty; generally clean, healthy surroundings and easy access to outdoor recreation are very strong components of that appeal. This Trail can play a key role in connecting local features and assets to provide an overall enjoyable experience and enhance that appeal. In addition, it can help produce economic development with opportunities to serve Trail users. Funding at the State level promotes regional cooperation and reflects the broad regional nature of the benefits the Trail will provide.

The CT environment is a key part of what defines life in CT. Promoting and protecting it is fundamental to keeping CT attractive. My husband and I are both skilled professionals and have actively considered opportunities to relocate. It is the quality of life in CT that has kept us here and the healthy environment and natural beauty are key parts of that.

Long term success for CT requires that we maintain our State's strong appeal. And that appeal includes a highly enjoyable great outdoors and a healthy, pleasing environment.

Please do what you can to help approve *Senate Bill No. 775*. Thank you for supporting Connecticut's environment.

Sincerely,

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cc:

Senator Abrams

Representative Santiago

Representative Aresimowicz

Representative Ritter

Representative Klarides

Senator Looney

Senator Duff

Senator Fasano

Governor Lamont

Lieutenant Governor Bysiewicz