Dear Co-Chair Cohen, Co-Chair Demicco, Vice Chair Kushner, Vice Chair Gresko, Ranking Member Miner, Ranking Member Harding, and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee,

1) OPPOSE SB 586 / SUPPORT raised bill 894

I am writing to ask that you please OPPOSE SB 586 - a bill that would authorize bear hunting in Litchfield County. I ask that you instead SUPPORT raised bill 894, which would authorize non-lethal bear management methods.

Almost every CT resident is against bear hunting, except hunters, who represent less than 1% of residents in the state. It is profoundly undemocratic that the committee is catering to 1% of CT residents and ignoring the other 99%.

Here are the FACTS on bears.

Black bears are NOT overpopulated. There are a paltry 200 bears in the Northwest corner, according to a UCONN study, and the state has a capacity for about 2,000 bears, according to the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

When it comes to bear populations, size doesn’t matter. Scientific studies show there is a weak correlation between the population of bears and bear attacks and states with bear hunts report increasing conflicts. That’s because “People are responsible for increased bear-human conflicts by allowing bears to become human-food conditioned and human habituated,” according to an Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) report.

Limiting the availability and access to food attractants is “the most definite means for reducing conflict,” according to the AFWA report.

There have been ZERO human fatalities from bear attacks in the state, but hunters have killed 10 and injured 118 in CT since 1982.
2) SUPPORT HR 6014

Please vote YES on HR 6014, which would ban the use of leghold and body-gripping traps - barbaric 19th century devices that ensnare the limbs, and crush both targeted and non-targeted animals.

Thank you,
Nicole Bruck
Stamford, CT