



P.O Box 734

Bloomfield, CT 06002

Dear Members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee,

I am the President of the Wintonbury Land Trust (WLT). Our organization strongly opposes Section 1 of SB 1137 and Section 5 of SB 1138 both of which would require nonprofits, including land trusts, with "significant" savings accounts, endowments or pension funds to pay into a state "community development account" the equivalent of 25% property tax.

The WLT has conserved over 300 acres of open space and farmland in Bloomfield and surrounding towns for the benefit of our community. Our all-volunteer organizations connects people with nature through outdoor activities and educational programs.

We estimate that this proposal would, at minimum, amount to an annual \$10,000 tax, almost doubling our annual operating expenses. This would divert critical resources from our land trust and cripple our ability to acquire and manage open spaces and other natural resources that benefit our quality of life and local economy. It would penalize our land trust for our efforts to set aside funds to help secure our organization's long-term viability and to care for our land trust's properties and easements in perpetuity pursuant to best management practices (The Land Trust Standards & Practices). This proposal would also undermine relationships with donors who want their donations to support land conservation and not a state tax.

This proposal would add a financial burden on our organization, threatening our ability to care for land entrusted to us for the benefit of future generations.

Please vote NO on these proposals that would tax land trusts.

Sincerely,

Victor C. Herson
President, Wintonbury Land Trust

