



Berlin Land Trust, Inc.

April 29, 2019

Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee
FINtestimony@cga.ct/gov

Re: SB 1137, Section 1
SB 1138, Section 5

Dear Sir/Madam:

The Berlin Land Trust, Inc. objects strongly to the above captioned bills which will impose a fee or tax on lands conserved by Connecticut Land Trusts for the following reasons:

1. It is a bad precedent to start taxing the charities such as land trusts. Land trusts assist the State of Connecticut by preserving our woods, wetlands, flora and fauna. The purpose of the land trusts is synonymous with the goals of the State in preservation.
2. The gain to the towns would be nominal because most of the conserved lands either have conservation easements over them which reduce the value of the land for assessment purposes or are further protected (or will be) by the forest land exemption afforded owners of more than ten acres of forested land.
3. The smaller land trusts will face additional administrative burdens to comply with these fees or taxes. Remember that many land trusts have no paid staffs and are supported by volunteer effort only.

Frankly it is disheartening for our volunteers to think that the legislature and the towns would show so little respect for the efforts made by our state's land trusts to protect and conserve the visual beauty and environmental quality of our state.

Very truly yours,

Dennis L. Kern
DLK/tt

Copy: Board of Directors