

Testimony of Fred Jones
President, Hartland Land Trust, Inc.
In Support of
HB 6441 AN ACT CONCERNING CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION
March 8, 2021

Dear Senator Cohen, Representative Borer, and members of the Environment Committee

My name is Fred Jones, of 224 Old Forge Road, West Hartland, CT. I am President of Hartland Land Trust Inc., and am testifying in support of HB 6441 AN ACT CONCERNING CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION, on behalf of the board of directors of Hartland Land Trust.

Hartland Land Trust particularly supports Section 3 of this bill. Section 3 allows Connecticut municipalities to establish a buyer's conveyance fee to fund land stewardship, climate resilience, and other environmental projects in our community.

Hartland is a very rural town on the border with Massachusetts, where we maintain an active land trust to help preserve undeveloped land for the sake of this and future generations. The town is very working class. There are no "high rollers" to fund land acquisitions. The town does not have large tax revenues. We do not have a police department. Our fire department is all volunteer. There is no high school.

But Hartland residents love the land. Through the generosity of many small contributions, plus some major grants and the altruism of exceptional land donors, we are helping make sure Connecticut's rural nature is preserved at least in our small corner of the world.

Allowing the town to establish a fund that will help with activities that ultimately support the land trust would be a great blessing.

We could use the town funds to revive our conservation commission. and make it a viable energetic ongoing commission - the public counterpoint to our private land trust. We might also establish an "open space conservation fund". There are many ways even a modest fund could be of tremendous help to our land trust.

Please keep in mind, Section 3 does not mandate the buyer conveyance fee. It only allows towns to have the option to establish it.

Saving Connecticut's remaining rural land is its own positive measure. In a time when we must confront climate change, preservation of forests that absorb carbon dioxide and produce oxygen is especially significant.

Hartland Land Trust Inc. urges the Environment Committee to support HB 6441.

Thank you.