

March 7, 2021

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

I ask you to support HB 6441, an Act Concerning Climate Change Adaptation. As you know, it follows recommendations of the Governor's Council on Climate Change.

Specifically, I support Section 3, which provides municipalities an option to establish a buyer's conveyance fee to fund land stewardship, climate resilience, and other environmental projects.

My coastal and Connecticut River Valley community of Old Lyme is fortunate to have an active Open Space Commission and town open spaces. Our town would benefit from this voluntary conveyance fee program.

Many Connecticut communities are still struggling to meet the state's open space goals. These were set well before the state, regional planning agencies and municipalities recognized the looming need for communities to deal with impacts of climate change.

Section 3 would provide municipalities the option of a local mechanism that can generate funds to protect and preserve open space as a means to mitigate climate change and provide funding for environmental stewardship such as invasive species control.

It also provides towns a funding mechanism for these activities that would not impact the municipal mill rate or require additional bonding.

As we have seen an influx of buyers seeking to live in pastoral Connecticut, work remotely and live in smaller towns, now is the time to give municipalities the flexibility to implement a local program.

Adoption of the program by towns would be optional, and it would cost the state nothing.

Several states, including Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island already allow similar buyer's conveyance fee programs.

Please support HB 6441 and give Connecticut communities the opportunity to decide whether to establish this funding program.

Thank you,  
Suzanne Thompson  
Old Lyme, CT  
Chairman, CT River Gateway Commission