



Substitute Senate Bill No. 896

Public Act No. 23-206

**AN ACT CONCERNING TREE REMOVAL ON PROPERTIES UNDER
THE CONTROL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) Not later than January 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the environment that details the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's hazardous tree removal activities in state parks for the previous calendar year. Such report shall include, but not be limited to: (1) An identification of each state park where any hazardous tree removal project occurred during such previous calendar year, (2) the total acreage for any such hazardous tree removal project, (3) an explanation of whether such hazardous tree removal project consisted of the removal of already fallen trees or the felling of trees, (4) the reasons for any such hazardous tree removal project, (5) the total cost for any such hazardous tree removal project and the source of funding for such project, (6) a description of the removal of any hazardous tree or group of hazardous trees that possessed unique characteristics, including, but not limited to, age, caliper, species,

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canopy or aesthetics, and (7) a description of any planned or anticipated hazardous tree removal project in any state park for the forthcoming calendar year.

Sec. 2. Section 23-8 of the general statutes is amended by adding subsection (f) as follows (*Effective October 1, 2023*):

(NEW) (f) In order to ensure that the benefits of open space and tree cover are enjoyed equitably by residents of the state, it shall be the goal of the state to increase the total percentage of environmental justice communities, as defined in section 22a-20a, that are covered by tree canopy, not later than January 1, 2040, by five per cent of the total area of such communities that have a current tree canopy cover of less than forty per cent.

Approved June 29, 2023