Name: Marc Favreau
Title:
Organization or Agency: Citizens' Climate Lobby
Topic: HB06659 - AAC THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30 2025 AN... Supports

Testimony:

Honorable members of the Appropriations Committee,

Connecticut's public health and natural resources depends on the dedicated employees of the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. As you refine the biennial budget for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, I ask you to give particular attention to funding strong staffing in the following high-priority areas:

Clean water engineers and administrators: Clean water infrastructure is one of the most powerful engines we have for cleaning up our Sound and rivers, protecting public health, and generating jobs. Connecticut invests in it through the Clean Water Fund, but there's a bottleneck; those dollars can't move without adequate engineers and administrators at CT DEEP to shepherd them through.
Enforcement: Enforcing the laws that protect the air we breathe, the water we drink and play in, and the lands we enjoy is time-intensive work that takes experience to perform well, and these positions were hit hard by the retirement cliff. When CT DEEP can't enforce the law, nonprofits are forced to take legal action. Rebuilding enforcement strength within the agency is best.
Environmental Justice: I support the budget proposal to hire new CT DEEP personnel focused on environmental justice and charged with facilitating the development of inclusive, fair, and equitable policies.

Inland wetlands: These delicate, biodiverse areas are too often threatened by development and degradation. Municipalities need guidance from CT DEEP experts and help enforcing the laws that protect inland wetlands and watercourses.
State parks: Connecticut's state parks and forests provide habitat for wildlife and public recreation, but the staff who care for them are often stretched thin. We must adequately fund CT DEEP parks' personnel to keep these places thriving for all who use them and keep Connecticut's coastal tourism industry strong.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Marc Favreau
Greenwich, CT