



**Testimony  
Betsy Gara  
Executive Director  
Connecticut Council of Small Towns  
Before the Environment Committee  
March 10, 2023**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on behalf of the Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) regarding concerns with **SB 1144, AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE'S PROPERTY ACQUISITION AND CONDEMNATION AUTHORITY FOR CERTAIN FLOOD PREVENTION, CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND EROSION CONTROL SYSTEMS.**

COST recognizes that many communities are struggling to address increased flooding inundation, erosion, and climate change impacts. However, we are concerned that as drafted, SB-1144 grants state agencies broad authority to exercise eminent domain and condemnation powers to address flood prevention, climate resilience, and erosion control.

Given that numerous properties may be subject to eminent domain and condemnation under the bill, COST is concerned that it may negatively impact property rights and housing values, triggering issues with respect to property tax revenues.

Municipalities recognize the importance of addressing flooding, erosion, and climate resiliency issues. It is unclear how this bill will ensure coordination with affected communities to address these issues without undermining the property rights of residents and diminishing housing values.

We recognize that federal funding would be enormously helpful to the state and municipalities in addressing these issues. However, it is unclear how this bill positions Connecticut to receive federal funding.

COST stands ready to work with lawmakers and the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to address these concerns.