

CONNECTICUT
Land Conservation Council

Testimony on House Bill No. 6637
Environment Committee
Submitted by Amy Blaymore Paterson, Esq., Executive Director
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Co-Chairs Cohen and Demicco, Vice-Chairs Gresko and Kushner, Ranking Members Harding and Miner, and members of the Environment Committee:

As the state's umbrella organization for the land conservation community, including its 137+/- land trusts, the Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) advocates for land conservation, stewardship and funding, and works to ensure the long-term strength and viability of the land conservation community in Connecticut.

Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony on behalf of CLCC in support of **House Bill No. 6637, An Act Requiring An Invasive Species Stamp For The Operation Of A Motorboat On The Inland Waters Of The State.**

The introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species is a serious problem across the state – impacting water quality, recreational activities, property values, and the overall health of the environment. HB 6637 would establish a funding source to assist municipalities, which struggle to find consistent resources to study, prevent, and treat these infestations, as well as for education and other programs to help address this insidious problem.

To strengthen the bill, we ask the committee to expressly include rivers – which are also threatened by invasive species infestations. We also ask that the proposed program be expanded so that the funds are also available to land trusts that work in cooperation with towns to address aquatic invasive species.

On behalf of CLCC, I wish to thank the committee for proposing this funding mechanism to address this serious problem. We consider it a welcome first step towards the land conservation community's goal of establishing a comprehensive program to address both aquatic and terrestrial invasives species that threaten our environment.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our comments. As always, we would be happy to answer any questions you may have and provide additional information about the wonderful land conservation work undertaken every day in communities across the state.

