

CONNECTICUT
Land Conservation Council

Testimony

Senate Bill Nos. 1003 and 229 and House Bill Nos. 5384, 5385, and 7294

Environment Committee

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Connecticut Land Conservation Council

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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:

Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony on behalf of CLCC in support of the following bills:

SB 1003 An Act Concerning The Use Of Single-use Plastic And Paper Bags (*with changes*)

HB 5384 An Act Requiring The Elimination Of Single-use Styrofoam Containers

HB 5385 An Act Requiring The Elimination Of Single-use Plastic Straws

SB 229 An Act Prohibiting The Use Of Styrofoam Trays In Connecticut Schools

HB 7294 An Act Concerning Bottle Redemption in Connecticut

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.

At first glance, it would appear that commenting on bills concerning plastic, polystyrene, and bottle redemption is a bit outside the scope of CLCC's land conservation mission. However, successful land conservation is as much about the perpetual care of the habitats and other conservation values of the land as it is about securing the legal protection of the land to begin with. At every level, both public and private, we need to continue to do whatever we can to ensure continued quality and active stewardship and management of conservation lands throughout the state. With the majority of our state's land trusts operating on the backs of volunteers -- and municipalities hampered by budgetary constraints -- this is no easy task.

Land management and stewardship is a huge responsibility of land trust and community park and open space volunteers and staff; their daily work includes everything from implementing management plans, building and maintaining trails, battling invasives, monitoring for violations of the easements, encroachments and other illegal activity, to picking up trash. Reducing plastic and polystyrene, and the expansion of the bottle bill will help in the constant battle to keep our preserves, parks and other open spaces free of debris that are unsightly and harmful to the quality of our land and water.

With respect to SB 1003, CLCC concurs with the recommendation to enhance the incentive to use reusable bags by also placing a charge on paper bags.

On behalf of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council, I thank you for raising these important bills and for this opportunity to provide our comments. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

