

CONNECTICUT
Land Conservation Council

Testimony
Senate Bill No. 519, House Bill Nos. 6123 and 6356
Environment Committee
Submitted by Amy Blaymore Paterson, Esq., Executive Director
Connecticut Land Conservation Council
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Senator Kennedy, Senator Miner, Representative Demicco 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 regarding the following Committee bills: **SB 519**: AA AUTHORIZING THE SOUTH CENTRAL CONNECTICUT REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT AND INVEST IN CERTAIN NONCORE BUSINESS ACTIVITIES (Oppose); **HB 6123**: AAC TREE REMOVAL ALONG LIMITED ACCESS HIGHWAYS (Support); and **HB 6356**: AAC PUBLIC NOTICE OF TREE REMOVAL ON MUNICIPAL PROPERTY (Support).

CLCC opposes SB 519: AA Authorizing the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority to Conduct and Invest in Certain Noncore Business Activities

CLCC, in partnership with several other conservation organizations, has met with representatives of the South Central Regional Water Authority (RWA) to discuss our strong concerns with respect to any amendments to the RWA enabling authority that would impact Class I and II watershed lands. In particular, based upon those conversations, we anticipated seeing improved language that would prohibit noncore business activities on Class I and II watershed lands and expressly retain Department of Public Health regulatory oversight. SB 519 fails to provide such protections which are critical to safeguarding the quality and quantity of Class I and II watershed lands.

CLCC supports HB 6123: AAC Tree Removal Along Limited Access Highways

While recognizing the public safety and land management considerations underlying state tree removal activities, the public is often concerned by what appears to be indiscriminate removal of healthy trees along public roadways. This bill would help to address those concerns by requiring the Department of Transportation to follow reasonable notice and land management protocols prior to conducting tree removal activities.

CLCC supports HB 6356: AAC Public Notice of Tree Removal on Municipal Property

This bill provides an important technical clarification to existing Connecticut General Statutes to ensure that public notice and vegetation management activities within "public ways or grounds" includes both state and municipal lands.

On behalf of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council, I thank you for this opportunity to provide our comments. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have and/or provide additional information about the wonderful conservation work undertaken every day by our state's land trust community.