

2024 Connecticut Land Conservation Conference Takeaways from CT General Assembly 2024 Update

*Insights and Tips from Representatives Mike Demicco (21st District), Joe Gresko (121st District), Christine Palm (36th District), and Mary Mushinsky (85th District)
Moderated by Robert LaFrance, Policy Director, Audubon CT*

How to Best Contact Your Connecticut State Representatives

About Letters and Emails

Your name and full postal and email addresses should be at the top. They want to know if you are a constituent voting in their district. Use bullets and be concise.

Serving in the State House, they represent about 26,000 people each. They want to be good representatives and are local members of our communities. Paid at a part-time rate, many work more than full-time at this job.

The legislators don't like "boilerplate" emails. These are prewritten and require citizens to click a couple of times to send, filling up their inboxes and causing communication problems. They know many environmental groups in the state use these, but this is their honest perspective.

Equally, they welcome individually written messages. They are eager for support for the environmental bills that they are trying to pass. Sincere, heartfelt, well-informed, and thoughtfully reasoned messages give the representatives messages and quotes that they can use to argue for and against bills. They are open to old-fashioned phone calls, but not before 9am and not after 9pm. They especially want to hear from the people in their districts.

According to them, letters addressed to them in Hartford collect in their mailboxes and might not be seen for two weeks or more after delivery. Seven legislators share one Administrative Assistant.

They also encourage group letters or emails, in which people sign off on a message. This could be from a civic or religious group or a group of like-minded people. It is best if each person lists their postal and email addresses. Also, asking for co-sponsorship of a bill is generally a good idea.

If you are concerned about a bill, and your Rep. already supports it, contact any friends, relatives, and contacts in districts of representatives that don't support it and get those people to contact their legislator.

About Testimony

It is best to present testimony in person at hearings in Hartford. That said, testimony on Zoom is also compelling, and written testimony is also helpful. The schedule of committee meetings and public hearings is available on the CT General Assembly website at <https://www.cga.ct.gov>.

Hearings have rules for using the airtime. If people include false information in their testimony, the rules do not allow time to correct it. Legislators can use citizens with conspiracy theories to use up time on false and misleading testimony. They urged people of reason to come to Hartford and speak. Please don't be intimidated!

Notes taken by Linda Sargent