



## AFFORDABLE HOUSING – AGRICULTURE & DAIRY – HISTORIC PRESERVATION – OPEN SPACE

April 24, 2018

Dear Legislator:

As the 2018 legislative session draws to a close, the undersigned organizations would like to thank-you for your continued support of the protection and continued funding of the Community Investment Act (CIA).

Enacted in 2005 (Public Act 05-228), the CIA established what has become Connecticut's primary source of dedicated funding to conserve open space, protect farmland, preserve historic properties and supplement affordable housing programs. Each sector represents a critical component of our statewide quality of life and economy.

The program has been an extraordinary success. To date, the CIA has reinvested over \$152 million in 1,400+ projects in every community across the state. A list of projects funded in your district is attached and a statewide list of projects is available at <https://communityinvestmentact.org/>.

Since its inception, the CIA has performed as designed, making timely and much needed investments in projects that enhance community character and quality of life, while strengthening our state and local economy with responsible planning, job creation and leveraging millions of dollars in private matching funds and consequent investment and spending.

CIA funds accrue from a \$40 recording fee collected on every real-estate transaction in the state. This fee income is then distributed by formula to town clerks and the state agencies administering the qualified programs.

In recent years, however, and despite its success, this dedicated funding stream has been targeted for both diversion and sweeps of funds. As a result, some CIA-funded programs have been suspended at various times at the agency level.

In 2015, the legislature passed a measure to divert fifty percent of recording fee revenue from reaching the CIA accounts, an action that, per formula, resulted in a seventy percent cut in funding in the four core program areas. In 2016, the final budget agreement swept unallocated funds from the CIA accounts to remedy general revenue shortfalls. Agencies were forced to work with reduced fund balances that restricted the timing and volume of program activity,

resulting in a growing list of unfunded needs and projects across the state. In 2017, although full funding was restored July 1st, the CIA account once again suffered a \$5 million cut in each year of the biennium as part of deficit mitigation adjustments at the end of the special session.

We understand the difficult cuts and decisions that the General Assembly must make this year in an effort to balance the state budget. However, as outlined above, the CIA has already paid a steep price with significant consequences these past several years. We thank you in advance for protecting the CIA from further diversions and sweeps so it can continue to play a vital role in underwriting the state's economic well-being and overall quality of life in our communities.

Sincerely,

Major Supporters of the Community Investment Act (in alphabetical order):

***1000 Friends of Connecticut - American Farmland Trust - Audubon Connecticut - CT Association of Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions - CT Audubon Society - CT Council of Small Towns - CT Conference of Municipalities - CT Farm Bureau Association - CT Farmland Trust - CT Forest & Park Association - CT Fund for the Environment - CT Housing Coalition - CT Land Conservation Council - CT League of Conservation Voters - CT Main Street Center - CT Preservation Action - CT State Grange -CT Trust for Historic Preservation - Housatonic Valley Association Legal Assistance Resource Center - Local Initiatives Support Corporation - Hartford and Connecticut Statewide - Partnership for Strong Communities - The Nature Conservancy - Trust for Public Land - United Way of Connecticut - Working Lands Alliance***

Enclosure(s): CIA Project List(s) by Town