

CONNECTICUT Land Conservation Council

Testimony on House Joint Resolution No. 37
Environment Committee
Submitted by Amy Blaymore Paterson, Executive Director
February 27, 2023

Co-Chairs Lopes and Gresko, Vice-Chairs Hochadel and Palm, Ranking Members Harding and Callahan, and members of the Environment Committee:

The Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) is the state's umbrella organization for the land conservation community, including its ~130 land trusts. We advocate for land conservation, stewardship and funding, and work to ensure the long-term strength and viability of Connecticut's land conservation community.

As a coalition organization, CLCC works with Connecticut's robust land trust community as well as DEEP, municipalities, and other entities committed to land conservation and addressing climate change at every level. CLCC was a member of the Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3) Forests Sub-Group, a member of the Policy on Resilient Forests for Connecticut's Future (PRFCT Future) Working Group, and, most recently, a participant in the GC3 Resilient Infrastructure and Nature-based Solutions Working Group.

Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony in support of **House Joint Resolution No. 37: Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution to Provide for an Environmental Rights Amendment.**

HJ 37 proposes a new Green Amendment to the Connecticut Constitution. The resolution codifies: (1) the rights of all Connecticut residents to a clean environment, stable climate, and sustainable ecosystem and recognizes these rights as essential to the public's public health, safety and general welfare; and (2) the role of government, at every level, as trustee of the state's natural resources, including climate – meaning, an affirmative duty to protect these natural resources.

CLCC supports this Amendment which not only recognizes the public's right to a clean environment and stable climate but also may introduce new avenues to enforce laws that protect the environment. If approved by the Connecticut General Assembly and then by voters via statewide ballot referendum, Connecticut would become the fourth state in the country to adopt a Constitutional Green Amendment.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide input on this important topic. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

