

CONNECTICUT
Land Conservation Council

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 1147
Environment Committee
Submitted by Amy Blaymore Paterson, Executive Director
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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.

Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony in support of **Senate Bill 1147, An Act Concerning the Environmental Justice Program of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.**

It is well documented that low-income and minority groups often are exposed to higher amounts of pollution and experience higher adverse health impacts associated with the siting of polluting facilities in vulnerable communities. DEEP, like the federal Environmental Protection Agency, has made a commitment to ensure that laws to protect people from environmental and health hazards are applied equitably and that all people have equal ability to participate in the decision-making process for activities that impact public health and the environment in their community.

To that end, CLCC supports this bill which would enhance the environmental and public health considerations made under the state's environmental justice statute and provide DEEP and the Connecticut Siting Council with the ability to deny certain permits for a new affecting facility and apply conditions to the expansion of an existing facility. Among other enhancements to the existing statute, the bill strengthens requirements for the development and implementation of a public participation plan as part of the permit process for affecting facilities. To further strengthen the public input process we recommend requiring community resident involvement, in addition to that of town officials, in negotiating Community Environmental Benefit Agreements.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on this important bill, and for all you do.

