

CONNECTICUT
Land Conservation Council

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 102 and House Bill No. 5129
Environment Committee
Submitted by Amy Blaymore Paterson, Esq., Executive Director
Connecticut Land Conservation Council
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Senator Kennedy, Senator Miner, Representative Demicco, Ranking Member Harding, and Members of the Environment Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony regarding the following Committee bills: SB 102: An Act Concerning Minor Revisions To Environmental Protection And Agriculture-Related Statutes (Oppose in part); and HB 5129: An Act Establishing A "Save Our Lakes" Number Plate To Combat Aquatic Invasive Species And Cyanobacteria Blooms (Support).

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.

SB 102: An Act Concerning Minor Revisions To Environmental Protection And Agriculture-Related Statutes. CLCC supports Sections 1-4 (requested by CT DEEP) and Sections 5 and 6 (requested by CT Department of Agriculture), all of which are minor, albeit important, technical changes relating to, *inter alia*, forest practitioner certification renewals, certification reciprocity, education reporting requirements, and revisions to include reference to current and any future federal agriculture conservation easement programs. The word change proposed in Section 7, however -- "materially" to "permanently" -- may have a significant impact upon the evaluation of siting solar facilities on prime farmland and core forests. Consequently, we respectfully contend that this proposed change goes beyond the scope of a "minor revision" and should be evaluated as part of a comprehensive bill related to the siting of renewable energy facilities.

HB 5129: An Act Establishing A "Save Our Lakes" Number Plate To Combat Aquatic Invasive Species And Cyanobacteria Blooms. We thank the Environment Committee for seeking to address the very serious problem of invasive species proliferation in our state's environment. To that end, we support establishing creative mechanisms, such as a commemorative license plate, to enable funds to be dedicated for that purpose.

On behalf of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council, I thank you for this opportunity to provide our comments and would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

