

CONNECTICUT
Land Conservation Council

Testimony on Proposed Senate Bill No. 482
Planning and Development Committee
Submitted by Amy Blaymore Paterson, Esq., Executive Director
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Co-Chairs Cassano, Lemar, and Logan, Ranking Member Zawistowski, and Members of the Planning and Development Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) regarding **Senate Bill No. 482, An Act Concerning the Subdivision of Land and Open Space** (SB 482). CLCC opposes this bill which would limit the amount of land a town may require for dedication as open space to not more than twenty per cent of a proposed subdivision.

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. Establishing a local funding option for land conservation has been a top priority for CLCC for several years.

Many Connecticut municipalities experience substantial development pressure and work hard to balance the need for new housing with the retention of important forestland, farmland, and other open spaces that benefit the local economy, quality of life, and environment. New residential subdivisions not only reduce the amount of open spaces available for these community benefits, but also create increased demand for municipal services and facilities. Recognizing these competing interests and the need for local autonomy in land use planning, Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 8-25 enables towns to incorporate set-aside requirements into their respective subdivision regulations to offset some of the impacts of the development upon the town's infrastructure and quality of life.

Pursuant to this enabling authority, the local commission's determination of the appropriate percentage of set-aside is discretionary and based upon an evaluation of each proposed subdivision. In undertaking this evaluation, the commissions apply criteria set forth in their respective town's regulations developed in accordance with the town's individual Plan of Conservation and Development and other information unique to each community. The determination of the appropriate amount of land to be set-aside is thus made on a case-by-case basis.

CLCC opposes SB 482 because it ignores the unique nature of each community, interferes with local decision-making, and places an arbitrary restriction upon municipal land use planning and decision-making contrary to the intent of C.G.S Section 8-25. We urge you to vote no on SB 482.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our comments. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

