

CONNECTICUT
Land Conservation Council

Testimony on Senate Joint Resolution No. 36
Government Administration and Elections Committee
Submitted by Amy Blaymore Paterson, Executive Director
For public hearing on February 7, 2025

Co-Chairs Flexer and Blumenthal, Vice-Chairs Honig, Morrin Bello, and Osborne, Ranking Members Sampson and Mastrofrancesco, and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee:

The Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) is the state's umbrella organization for the land conservation community, including its ~117 land trusts. CLCC is a 501(c)(3) organization operating statewide. Our mission is to elevate and strengthen land conservation in Connecticut. CLCC envisions a future where every Connecticut community is supported and sustained by a diverse mix of conserved land, and land conservation is embraced as an essential community value.

Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony in support of **Senate Joint Resolution No. 36, Resolution Proposing A State Constitutional Amendment Concerning Environmental Rights.**

SJ 36 proposes a new Environmental Rights 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, particularly in underserved and vulnerable communities that bear the brunt of environmental and health hazards; 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.

In November 2019, in an emphatic display of commitment to environmental protection, the public demonstrated their firm desire to better protect public lands with a Constitutional Amendment through the resounding passage of Ballot Question #2. We urge the Committee to move SJ 36 through the legislative process, recognizing the importance of the public's voice in this matter and providing the people of Connecticut with the same opportunity to decide on an Environmental Rights Amendment to our Constitution.

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

