

CONNECTICUT
Land Conservation Council

Testimony
Raised House Bill No. 5215
Education Committee
Submitted by Amy Blaymore Paterson, Executive Director
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March 6, 2020

Co-Chairs Sanchez and McCrory, Vice-Chairs Barry and Daugherty Abrams, Ranking Members McCarty and Berthel, and members of the Education Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council **in support** of **Raised House Bill No. 5215, An Act Concerning the Inclusion of Climate Change Instruction in the Public School Curriculum.**

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.

Connecticut is ranked third in the country behind California and Massachusetts as having the highest number of land trusts. With a mission to conserve and protect land *in perpetuity*, our state's land trusts are critical private partners with which the state may pursue and maximize natural climate solutions – including the development and implementation of careful forest, agricultural, grasslands, and wetlands policies and protections.

Land trusts are also essential stakeholders in ensuring that people build connections with land and nature. From the farthest rural corners of the state to our largest urban centers, providing experiential learning opportunities for children is especially important – with land trusts working in partnership with their respective local school districts to offer outdoor programs that complement state mandated science curriculum.

By expressly including climate change instruction into public school curriculum, HB 5215 serves to enhance opportunities for collaboration between local land trusts and the schools in their communities to educate the next generation about the implications of climate change on their lives, their communities, and beyond.

We thank the committee for your consideration and for this opportunity to submit comments. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

