

To: Honored Co-Chairs Sen. Cohen and Rep. Gresko, Vice Chairs Sen. Slap and Rep. Palm, Ranking Members Sen. Miner and Rep. Harding, Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee

From: Sharon Huttner, Member, Branford Clean Energy Ad Hoc Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of HB 6441 that will fund climate adaptation and resilience projects. This legislation is a unique opportunity to provide new tools to our towns and cities to fight climate change.

Section 3 of the bill will give municipalities an option to establish a buyer's conveyance fee to fund land stewardship, climate resilience, and other environmental projects in our communities. Towns across the state could use these funds to support local projects such as conserving open space, combatting invasive species in lakes, testing for brownfield remediation, stewardship of urban parks, creating woodland trails, matching state and federally funded grants, and many other environmental projects.

Adoption of the program by towns is optional, and at no expense to Connecticut.

Municipalities can choose what is best for them and their residents.

This would not impact the municipal mill rate or require further local bonding.

Many towns have voiced their desire to have a local conveyance fee option to help their conservation efforts. This is not just a one-time infusion of money to purchase land—this is a long-term sustainable funding stream that will help our land, water and climate for generations. Branford has been a leader in this effort with their establishment of a Coastal Resiliency Fund and this act will support further projects to protect our environment.

I urge you to support HB 6441 and give municipalities the freedom to choose the financial tools that are best suited to their local environmental needs. Passage of this bill will ultimately benefit our entire state. Thank you.

Sharon Huttner
Branford