



March 5, 2021

To: Senator Christine Cohen, Co-Chair
Representative Dorinda Borer, Co-Chair
Senator Derek Slap, Vice Chair
Representative Joseph P. Gresko, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Environment

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 6441

CONNECTICUT
CHAPTER

AMERICAN
SOCIETY OF
LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTS
P.O. BOX 209197
NEW HAVEN
CONNECTICUT
06520

WWW.CTASLA.ORG

Dear Members of the Committee on Environment:

The Connecticut Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (CTASLA) would like to register our support of Governor's HB 6441: An Act Concerning Climate Change Adaptation.

As Landscape Architects, we are deeply committed to managing and ameliorating the effects that climate change is having to our state and global environment. Our members engage these issues, often on a daily basis. The increasingly diverse set of solutions they and other professionals generate in address these challenges are regarded as critical to the long-term success of a resiliently, sustainably, and adaptably built environment.

While an understanding of global implications is necessary in effectively addressing climate change, we believe effective local-based initiatives are critical in maintaining a community-minded perspective to the climate change challenge. We applaud the governor and your committee for maintaining an act that champions municipally-driven solutions through the designation of a local authority. Connecticut may be a small-state, but it comprises a diverse collection of towns and cities, each with its in own unique qualities.

As a municipally-driven program, and as addressed in the current language of the act, the local authority in its implementation of the program may rely heavily on a mix of professionals in the reconstruction, operation, maintenance, and inspection of their systems. These Authorities may also rely on these professionals in the preparation of maps, plans and specifications for their systems. Explicitly identified in the current language of the act, is the use of Climate Change and Coastal Resiliency Funds for the fees and expenses of "...attorneys, engineers, surveyors, superintendents or inspectors...". In addition to the great services these professional provide, we believe additional professionals - such as Landscape Architects, Soil Scientists, and Architects – have played, and will continue to play a critical role in developing solutions to reduce flooding, promote climate resilience, and control erosion. While terms like "engineers" often encompass a diverse range of services inclusive of those aforementioned, municipal officials may interpret existing language as limiting. As such, we recommend the addition of language to the act that will provide municipalities flexibility in hiring the expertise most appropriate in generating solutions unique to their community's needs. Consider the following **bold and underlined revisions** to lines 254 through 263:

Such assessment may include a proportionate share of any expenses incidental to the completion of such flood [or] prevention, climate resilience and erosion control system, such as fees and expenses of attorneys, engineers, **landscape architects, design professionals,** surveyors, superintendents or inspectors, the cost of any property purchased or acquired for such work, interest on securities, the cost of preparing maps, plans and specifications, the cost to reconstruct, repair, maintain, supervise, operate and manage such system and the cost of printing, publishing or serving advertisements or notices incidental thereto.

CTASLA believes this revision, or a similar revision allows municipalities the freedom to retain the most qualified professional for their unique flood reduction, climate resilience and erosion control systems needs, and will best meet the intentions of this act and greatly improve success of its implementation.

We, the Connecticut Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, strongly support HB 6441 with the minor revisions noted above, and urge you to favorably vote the bill out of the Environment Committee.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Verry', written in a cursive style.

Matthew Verry, ASLA
President
ASLA Connecticut