

# CONNECTICUT Land Conservation Council

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 884 and House Bill No. 6551  
Environment Committee  
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Co-Chairs Cohen and Gresko, Vice-Chairs Slap and Palm, Ranking Members Miner and Harding, and members of the Environment Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) in support of **Senate Bill No. 884: An Act Reducing Transportation-related Carbon Emissions (SB 884)** and **House Bill No. 6551: An Act Concerning Environmental Air Quality (HB 6551)**.

The Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) is the state's umbrella organization for the land conservation community. We advocate for land conservation, stewardship and funding, and work to ensure the long-term strength and viability of land conservation in Connecticut. As a coalition organization, CLCC works with Connecticut's robust land trust community (~130 -- the third most in the country), as well as conservation organizations, municipalities, councils of government, regional conservation partnerships, and other entities committed to land conservation and addressing climate change at the local level. CLCC was also a proud member of the Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3) Forests Sub-Group and a dedicated attendee at the meetings of the Equity and Environmental Justice Working Group, among others.

The [Governor's Council on Climate Change \(GC3\) Phase 1 Report: Near-Term Actions January 2021](#) (GC3 Report) underscores the overlapping impacts that climate change has on our most vulnerable communities, our environment, and our public health. Addressing these impacts requires a multi-faceted approach -- from natural climate solutions (such as forestland protection and tree planting) to an overhaul of the state's transportation system.

Transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Connecticut and a substantial contributor to harmful air pollution. SB 884 implements the regional Transportation and Climate Initiative Program (TCI-P), a partnership with neighboring states to implement a regional program that caps CO2 emissions from gasoline and on-road diesel fuel. SB 884 proposes changes and initiatives that will generate investments in communities for transportation related projects. At least 35% of the TCI-P proceeds will be used for communities that are most negatively impacted by air pollution and underserved by the transportation system.

CLCC also supports HB 6551 which, if enacted, will establish a working group to identify disadvantaged communities for purposes of greenhouse gas reduction implications and to amend the environmental justice statute to enable disapproval of facility and permit applications when certain determinations concerning adverse environmental or public health effects are made. This effort also lends itself to a multi-pronged approach, which we hope will include consideration of natural climate solutions.

We ask the Committee to support SB 884 and HB 6551, which seek to implement critical action steps forward in addressing the impacts of climate change on public health and the environment, with a particular focus on the state's most vulnerable communities.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our comments. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

