Environment Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1498
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING THE PARK REPLACEMENT STATUTE.
Vote Date: 3/24/2025
Vote Action: Joint Favorable
PH Date: 3/17/2025
File No.: 613

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Environment Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill clarifies and strengthens Connecticut's General Statutes Section 7-131n. This statute requires municipalities to provide comparable replacement for any land they take, convert, or repurpose. In the past, courts have interpreted the that the statute was only applicable to land taken by eminent domain, which is uncommon, not to land the municipality already owns. By clarifying, this bill ensures that its application remains flexible and applicable to situations both common and uncommon.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Paul Aresta, Executive Director, Council on Environmental Quality
The council submitted public hearing testimony strongly supporting this bill. He explains why parks and open space are vital to the health of a community, both for the people and the environment. By requiring municipalities to replace any repurposed land, this bill protects Connecticut's citizens and environmental health.

6 citizens expressed support.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Betsy Gara, Executive Director, Connecticut Council of Small Towns
Betsy Gara's testimony explains that, while they support park preservation, they are concerned that the bill will impose significant burden on municipalities, therefore, they oppose it. She states that municipality needing to locate land in equal value and relative size takes time and stalling development, as well as often coming with additional costs.

1 citizen expressed opposition.

Reported by: Phoebe Mann **Date: March 27, 2025**