Act Number:	09-008 (Special Act)	
Bill Number:	1082	
Senate Pages:	1590-1591, 1657, 1659	**4**
House Pages:	8097-8104	**8**
Committee:	Environment: 3054-3058, 3090, 3096-3097, 3108-3110, 3141, 3196-3199, 3207, 3227-3238, 3240	**29**
	Page Total:	**41**

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Bill Number 1040, Mr. President, I move to place this item on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on the floor for consent. Seeing no objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Calendar 278, Senate Bill Number 795, I move to place this item on the foot of the calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Continuing to calendar page 8, Calendar 279, Senate Bill Number 813, Mr. President, I move to place this item on the foot of the calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. The next four items, Calendars 292, 299, 307, and 353 are all marked PR.

Mr. President, continuing calendar page 8, Calendar 359, Senate Bill Number 1082, Mr. President, I move to place this item on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on the floor for consent. Seeing no objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Calendar 361, Senate Bill Number 843, Mr. President, I move to place this item on the foot of the calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Next item, Calendar 369 is marked go.

Calendar 374, PR.

Calendar 376, PR.

Calendar 377, passed temporarily.

Calendar 379, Calendar 381, Calendar 382, and Calendar 385 are all marked PR.

Calendar page 10, Calendar 389 is marked go.

Calendar 390, PR.

Calendar page 10, Calendar 391, House Bill Number 5930, Mr. President, I move to place this item on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on consent. Seeing no objection, so

Calendar page 6, Calendar 245, Substitute for House Bill 6266.

Calendar page 7, Calendar 272, Substitute for Senate Bill 1040.

Calendar Page 8, Calendar 359, Senate Bill 1082.

Calendar page 10, Calendar 389, Substitute for House Bill 6327; Calendar 391, Substitute for House Bill 5930.

Calendar page 11, Calendar 395, Substitute for House Bill 5297; Calendar 403, House Bill 6462.

Calendar page 12, Calendar 414, Senate Bill 905.

Calendar page 13, Calendar 416, Senate Bill 998; Calendar 432, Substitute for Senate Bill 1020.

Calendar page 15, Calendar 457, Substitute for House Bill 6356.

Calendar page 16, Calendar 460, Substitute for House Bill 6301; Calendar 465, Senate Bill 963.

Calendar page 18, Calendar 487, Senate Bill 707; Calendar 489, Substitute for Senate Bill 810.

Calendar page 21, Calendar Number 506, Senate Bill 1136; Calendar 507, Senate Bill 1141.

Calendar page 22, Calendar 515, Substitute for Senate Bill 832.

Calendar page 23, Calendar 524, Substitute for

Have all Senators voted?

If all Senators have voted, please check the machine. The machine will be locked, the Clerk will call the tally.

THE CLERK:

Motion is on adoption of Consent Calendar Number 1. Total number voting, 36; those voting yea, 36; those voting nay, 0; those absent/not voting, 0.

THE CHAIR:

Consent Calendar Number 1 passes.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I would move that all items referred to various committees from the chamber today be transmitted to those committees immediately.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, also, would announce that we will be convening tomorrow about -- at 11:30 a.m., it's our intention to pick up with bills that had previously been marked "go" today. So I would move that all items previously marked go

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looking as refreshed and perky as he does right now, but welcome back, Ed. Thank you so very much.

Are there any other introductions? If not, we will return to the Call of the Calendar.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 586.

THE CLERK:

On Page 18, Calendar Number 586, Senate Bill Number 1082 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESERVATION OF STATE-OWNED AGRICULTURAL LAND. Favorable Report of the Committee on Environment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The distinguished Vice-Chairman of the Environment Committee, Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I move for the acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the Bill in concurrence with the Senate.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The question is on passage in concurrence. Would you explain the Bill, please, Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this Bill simply requires the Farmland Preservation Advisory

Board to review state-owned agricultural land excluding the lands currently held by the Department of Environmental Protection and make recommendations for permanent preservation. Thank you.

And I move for adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Will you remark further on the Bill? The distinguished Ranking Member of the Environment Committee, Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a couple of questions to the proponent of the Bill, through you, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Please proceed, Sir.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the public hearing, I recall testimony that seemed to be in conflict. As I recall, the Commissioner of Agriculture had stated that there were hundreds of small parcels of state-owned land that may contain farmland soils that could fall under the proposal, but others testified that they had identified basically, I believe it was 12 larger parcels, included, actually

included in the testimony, parcels in Lebanon, Newtown, Southbury, Cheshire, Somers, Enfield and Niantic.

Could the gentleman tell me if the intent of this Bill is to limit the scope of what the Farmland Advisory Committee will look at to basically those 12 or so parcels?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Representative Hurlburt, do you care to respond?

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Representative Chapin for bringing up that point. Yes, indeed, we did hear testimony from the Commissioner on that and the intent of this Bill is to limit it to about a dozen of the largest parcels across the state. That's a great question. I appreciate his asking it.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the gentleman for his answer. Mr. Speaker, I also rise in support of the Bill.

As I'm sure many in the Chamber know the state set a goal of farmland preservation of 130,000 acres. I think we're about 30 percent of the way there. Certainly, not meeting those goals as they were set out, I think that this Bill will help us in that effort to make sure that we do preserve as much remaining farmland as possible, and I encourage my colleagues to support it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Thank you, Sir. Representative Rowe.

REP. ROWE (123rd):

Thank you. Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker, through you, just a question or two to the well-dressed proponent.

The Farmland Preservation Advisory Board, am I correct that that entity already exists currently? Through you.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the compliment, Representative Rowe.

Yes.

REP. ROWE (123rd):

Okay. You could have also said, gee, you look nice dressed down as well, but I'll take your silence as an opinion.

The, what is there, through you, what is the Farmland Preservation Advisory Board's current charge?

What do they do? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and my apologies, Representative Rowe, you always look wonderful.

REP. ROWE (123rd):

Thank you.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

The Farmland Preservation Advisory Board assists in identifying lands across the state that would be eligible for grants to hold the land in perpetuity.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The Chair would just like to advise everyone that the sartorial resplendence of Members is not the question before the body. Representative Rowe, you still have the floor.

REP. ROWE (123rd):

Thank you. Well said, Mr. Speaker. Can you tell us the makeup of the Advisory Board currently? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Representative Rowe. Through you, Mr. Speaker, I believe there are 12 members, and I don't know offhand the appointments to that board.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Representative Rowe.

REP. ROWE (123rd):

Okay, thank you for the answers. I appreciate them, and I look forward to pressing the green button in a few minutes. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Thank you, Sir. The gentleman from Stratford, Representative Larry Miller.

REP. MILLER (122nd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in strong support of the bill. We, considering all the farmland that we've lost over the years and what little remaining is left, we ought to be doing everything possible to keep

what we have in tact for future generations, and I think it's a great Bill. We ought to all approve it. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Thank you, Sir. Are you read for the question? If so, staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Members take your seats. The machine will be opened.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by Roll Call. Members to the Chamber.

The House is voting by Roll Call. Members to the Chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Have all the Members voted? Have all the Members voted? If all the Members have voted, the machine will be locked. The Clerk will take a tally.

And the Clerk will announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

Senate Bill Number 1082 in concurrence with the Senate.

Total Number Voting	141
Necessary for Passage	71
Those voting Yea	141

Those voting Nay 0

Those absent and not voting 10

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The Bill is passed in concurrence with the Senate.

The House will stand at ease.

(Chamber at ease.)

The House will come back to order. Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 644.

THE CLERK:

On Page 21, Calendar Number 644, Senate Bill Number 754. AN ACT CONCERNING TECHNICAL CHANGES TO THE STATUTES REGARDING PERSONS WITH PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES AND PERSONS WITH SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS. Favorable Report of the Committee on Judiciary.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The distinguished Chair of the Public Health Committee, Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (38th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move for acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the Bill in concurrence with that in the Senate.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

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Thank you for your consideration, Mr. Chairman, and I would -- actually try to answer any questions anyway.

REP. ROY: Thank you Unk.

Any questions of the First Selectman from Branford? Seeing none you're clear. I'm not sure the committee is awake yet.

I don't see Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, he's not in yet? If not, Department of Agriculture Commissioner Philip Prelli.

PHILIP PRELLI: Good morning, Chairman Roy and members of the Environment Committee.

It's again a pleasure to -- to come and testify before you on two bills concerning the Department of Agriculture, Senate Bill 1082, An Act Concerning the Preservation of State-owned Agricultural Land and also Senate Bill 793, An Act Concerning STEAP Grants and the Conversion of Prime Farmland to Nonagricultural Use.

Let me start with Senate Bill 1082. The department has concerns regarding this bill. The department has a procedure in place to provide assistance to other state agencies for the leasing of their agricultural land to farmers. As Commissioner, we encourage the use of vacant public land to be used in agriculture. The Raised Bill 1082 is proposed -- has proposed the scope of the project is much greater than recognized. The details are not defined. It appears there may be hundreds of small parcels of state-owned land that may contain farmland soils that could fall under this proposal including many

of our state universities and Department of Transportation land, some public work land as well as the large lands.

It appears, and I say again -- I repeat, it appears that the purpose of this bill is to assure that the protection of the Southbury Training School for agriculture use. We are currently finalizing the details of a farm lease with the Department of Development Services on a 300 plus acre lease on -- on the school. As stated above, the bill as written would encompass many state agencies and many pieces of state property.

On Senate Bill 793, an acting concerning STEAP grants, we've come to you and talked to you on a couple other STEAP proposals. And one of our chief concerns on this is -- first of all we don't believe the bill is necessary and, if anything, it will be taking a step backwards in the way we were now working with STEAP grants. The Department of Agriculture has a procedure in place with the Department of Economic and Community Development that address this matter.

Our process of working with DECD has changed and now involves our review of small town economic assistant programs, STEAP grants, projects that impact more than 25 acres of prime farmland earlier in the project's process. Working with recommendations of the newly formed Farmland Preservation Advisory Board, Department of Ag and DECD are -- are requiring towns to have local conservation and/or agriculture commissions inventory town agricultural lands.

Once these lands are inventoried, towns are to designate and prioritize agriculture preservation areas. Again we also allow

grants for these programs under our Community Investment Act. The current procedure now allows Department of Ag and the DECD to work early in the project development process. And with that I'll leave that and gladly answer any questions, Mr. Chair.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

Any questions or comments from members of the committee?

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, Commissioner, how are you doing?

PHILIP PRELLI: Morning Representative.

REP. HURLBURT: That's not my question.

PHILIP PRELLI: I'm doing fine this morning, thank you.

REP. HURLBURT: In regards to Senate Bill 1082, An Act Concerning the Preservation of State-owned Agricultural Land, you state that there are maybe hundreds of small parcels. Do we have an inventory anywhere what state-owned land may be used for agricultural purposes?

PHILIP PRELLI: No. And -- and I think one of the difficulties is -- is defining exactly that, what is -- what is the agricultural purposes? We could have a one -- one acre piece of land owned by DOT that would be fine for some gardening and some agricultural purposes.

When you look at the total definition of agriculture in -- you know under 1-1q, it could be a lot of very small pieces of property. That's one of the problems we see

with that. We'd also look at let's say the University of Connecticut lands that are currently used as -- as -- for education purposes that would fall underneath this as well as any of their -- some of the farmland that they resell. That's one of the difficulties with the bill, Representative.

REP. HURLBURT: Would there -- would it be better if we made you put a trigger regarding the size of acreage per -- per size so that, you know, if it's, you know, two acres or under, or three acres or under, that it wouldn't be eligible for -- for protection or, you know, how -- how would the department like to tighten this up I guess would be my question. Make sure that it's actually feasible so that we can implement it if it were to pass.

PHILIP PRELLI: I think that that's one of the problems that people have is that there's already the protection in place. Its state-owned land. It can't just be used for anything else. And so I think when you start looking at that, how do you put a greater protection on is very difficult. To go and do a study it would have to be on every piece of property that would ever be under control or sale. And I say that having worked here, I also understand the -- the scariest phrase in the legislation and that's not withstanding any state -- state -- state law and we could get around that just as easy with this even if we had that inventory. So I'm not sure the purpose will meet what the underlying bill asks for.

REP. HURLBURT: Okay. I guess my final question would be and -- and maybe you're not the correct person to answer this question but maybe somebody else from the administration is. You know, not having inventory of

state-owned parcels that, you know, might be used for -- for agricultural purposes I think, you know, at some point we should look to do that just for our own house keeping -- house cleaning purposes.

PHILIP PRELLI: And I think that with most of the large acreage we've already looked at that and seen what's available. We work with the Department of Corrections. We work with Department of Development Services. We've looked at other -- other pieces of -- large pieces of land through DPW that we would allow leasing out and we continue to work with them to lease out those properties.

I think what you're -- what you need to look at is -- is that if there is space available is this the best thing to do is start leasing that out and we're willing to work with them. Can we start looking at that and can we start looking at large pieces of property? I think that might be a solution. But I think that you have to be very careful if you look in your area of the state, if you look along Route 6, there's an awful lot of land that's owned right now by DOT that isn't being used yet. All that land could be used for agriculture if the Department of Transportation wanted to start letting us use that.

I guess I would answer that saying that most of the center of the Merritt -- Merritt Parkway would also be available for -- for agricultural use but I'm not sure that would be the safest use of that problem.

REP. HURLBURT: Two very good points Commissioner. Thank you very much.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

of the committee?

Seeing none, Carroll, thank you very much.

CARROLL HUGHES: Thank you very much.

REP. ROY: Martin Mador followed by Carlene Kulisch.

MARTIN MADOR: Good morning, members of the committee. I'm Martin Mador. I'm the legislative and political chair for the Connecticut Sierra Club. It's a pleasure to be back here again.

HB 6660 HB 6375
SB 1084

I want to very quickly endorse four bills and oppose a fifth one. The two bills here which would help us preserve farmland, which is a very important priority for Sierra. 793 ensures that STEAP grants would not be used to destroy farmland useless there was simply no alternative to the project. We're loosing farmland at -- at an alarming rate. We feel our quality of life, and not to mention our food supply, requires a vibrant farming community in the state so that we must proactively preserve our remaining farms. To use state funds to convert farms to non-agricultural uses we feel would be the depth of bad public policy, so we strongly endorse 793.

1082 directs the Farmland Preservation Advisory Board to conduct a review of state owned farmland again towards a view of permanently protecting these farms. We strongly endorse this bill as well.

995 in Section 2 requires the contracts for collection of solid waste must also include provisions for collection of recyclables. We feel this is a valuable incremental step in

Thank you.

ERIC BROWN: Well, I think, thank you for that Representative. Yeah, I -- I think the smart growth working group is a -- is a really good example of what can happen when you bring a wide group of stakeholders together and you find out what everybody's issues are and you, you know, you try and work out some compromises that -- that hopefully will work and achieve the goals. So, yeah, that is the kind of thing that we're talking about. It doesn't, you know -- legislative involvement would be welcome but -- and I know the Depart -- I know Commissioner McCarthy, years ago, indicated to me that she was interested in doing something like that.

I think, basically, the Department's just got so much on its plate it hasn't been able to get around to it. But that's what I would like to see moved forward is instead of, you know, something that was put together, I don't know over a couple of weeks or months or something but nobody saw it as far as I know.

REP. HENNESSEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR MEYER: Are there any other questions or comments by members of the committee?

Thank you, Eric.

ERIC BROWN. Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR MEYER: Our next witness is Jiff Martin.

JIFF MARTIN: Good morning, members of the Environment Committee. My name is Jiff Martin. I'm here on behalf of the Working Lands Alliance, which is a state-wide coalition focused entirely on the issue of

SB 1082 HB 6660
SB 793 HB 5267

farmland protection.

I'm here to provide testimony on three bills. One is Senate Bill 1082; I would like to thank in particular, Representative Willis, for her work already on this. This is regarding state-held agricultural lands. I'd like to be clear that although the bill is -- is crafted exactly as we would like, I believe the commissioners' concerns about this bill are simply that the scope is too large.

If you look at our testimony, the last page includes the specific list of 12 parcels which we would like to be considered in this review process. All we're asking is that these 12 parcels, which are indeed farmlands which are managed by the Department of Agriculture, Department of Corrections, Department of Public Works, and one which is managed by DDS, that those parcels be reviewed to examine whether or not there's a way to permanently protect those lands. Although they are owned by the state they are not permanently protected. Special acts have been used in the past to carve off these types of properties.

And so we're proposing a very modest approach to review those 12 parcels and develop recommendations only. And the body we've asked to do that is the State Farmland Preservation Advisory Board. It seems like a -- a -- an appropriate entity to do that. So please look at that list. And if the text of the bill needs to be revised so that it's clear we're referring only to those 12 parcels, that would be wonderful.

Secondly, Bill 6660, which concerns the Face of Connecticut and authorizing bonds for a variety of programs, of course we are very supportive of this. We are thankful to the

goals and obstacles of the program and to develop criteria from mixed use preservation will certain strengthen the overall performance even more. Lastly I'd like to comment that we're hearing daily about stimulus usually involving huge dollar amounts and machinery but we should realize that stimulus can come in many sizes and shapes. This one is shaped and leveraged by the grass roots and results in stronger communities as well as stronger economies. Please allow the Face of Connecticut to grow into the kind of vision we all want for our state. Thank you.

SENATOR MEYER: Good. Thank you for your good advocacy.

Questions or comments by members of the committee? Thank you.

ANITA MIELERT: Thank you.

SENATOR MEYER: Our next witness is Henry Talmage, Connecticut Farm Trust.

HENRY TALMAGE: Good afternoon, Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, members of the committee. My name is Henry Talmage. I'm the executive director of the Connecticut Farmland Trust. I come before you today in support of Raised Bill 1082, An Act Concerning the Preservation of State-owned Agricultural Land.

Connecticut Farmland Trust is a private state-wide land trust with the mission to permanently protect Connecticut's working lands. CFT partners with the State Department of Agriculture, the federal government through the USDA farmland protection program and an RCS. We also partner with local government, local land trusts and other conservation groups.

Everyone concerned with farmland preservation recognize how difficult it will be to raise both public and private funds for farmland preservation in the medium -- short and medium term. This state-owned land that has the attributes for permanent farmland preservation should have -- should have that permanent protection measures applied and included in the totals for the state purchase of development right program. The state PDR program was created in 1978 with a goal of protecting 130,000 acres of farmland. To date roughly 35,000 acres have been protected by the program. This state-owned land that is currently used for agriculture is limited to about 12 -- 12 particular properties that should be reviewed, is not in our mind adequately protected even though it is owned by the state.

There is an opportunity here at a very low cost or no cost to permanently protect this very valuable farmland for the purpose of agriculture in perpetuity. The Farmland Preservation Advisory Board would review each parcel and evaluate whether these parcels should be permanently protected for agriculture. Not all properties will likely score well while others will score very highly. Recommendations from the farmland protection advisory board will be made to the commissioner and the appropriate methods of permanent preservation will be explored.

We have an opportunity before us to protect this important land without expending precious state dollars. The state already owns this important land and CFT urges your support for Raised Bill 1082 to find creative ways to permanently protect this land and assume -- and assure its availability for agriculture in

perpetuity. I'd be glad to answer any questions.

SENATOR MEYER: Mr. Talmage, from your experience, would there be any additional cost for this review process by the Farmland Preservation Advisory Board?

HENRY TALMAGE: Because the -- the limit in terms of number of properties to study would be fairly limited, say to 12 properties, what this would entail is at the committee level to, using the ranking criteria that already exists for the program, talk about the attributes for each particular parcel and look -- really evaluate whether or not it should or should not be done. I think that can be done very inexpensively at the committee level and make recommendations back to the commissioner so I think it will be very low cost.

SENATOR MEYER: Okay. Questions or comments by the committee?

Thanks very much.

HENRY TALMAGE: Thank you.

SENATOR MEYER: Our next witness is Roger Smith. Here Bill Ethier.

Afternoon, Bill.

HB6345

BILL ETHIER: Good afternoon. Thank you, Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, members of the Environment Committee. My name is Bill Ethier. I'm the Chief Executive Officer of the Home Builders Association of Connecticut.

We estimate that our 1,300 member firms build between 70 and 80 percent of all the housing units in the state. I'm here to express our

is a strict notification process right now unless they've changed anything. Is -- is that still the same standards?

CHRISTIE BRADWAY: Those are our -- our internal processes where we review the regulatory requirements under the spill reporting standards and we do report those situations and do respond for the -- to the clean up of those materials either a PCB or a non-PCB, we respond the same for both situations.

REP. LAMBERT: And the materials that are collected at that site, do you know where they're processed or where they're taken?

CHRISTIE BRADWAY: In a spilled response situation, we hire a licensed contractor to respond to those situations and we'll use the spill contractor for -- and we make sure that they go to appropriate disposal facilities.

REP. LAMBERT: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

Any other questions or comments from members of the committee?

Seeing none, thank you very much Christy.

Elaine LaBella, followed by Amy Paterson.

ELAINE LABELLA: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee. My name is Elaine LaBella. I'm the director of land protection for the Housatonic Valley Association and on behalf of the Housatonic Valley Association and the Highlands Coalition, I'm here to testify in support of Raised Bill 6345. We also support Bill 6660 and 1082. The Housatonic Valley Association, or HVA, was

what the Attorney General is thinking.

SLADE MEAD: Can I point out one thing that I -- I have met with the Attorney General and I'll -- I'll state this publicly because he asked us in a meeting, well we're -- I'm really worried about the housing component. We have told the Attorney General that the housing lots will not be smaller than 10 acres. We're willing to make that commitment. Currently, they can be 2 acre lots on part of the farm and 4 acre lots on part of the farm if my brothers and I choose to divide this up which we have every right to do. But we've told the Attorney General we would do a minimum of 10 acre lots. It's a pretty good size of property for a house.

REP. ROY: Thank you. I won't tell Senator -- Representative Miner we step outside the bill again.

Any other questions or comments for Mr. Mead?

Seeing none, thank you very much, sir.

SLADE MEAD: Mr. Chairman thank you. Appreciate it. Oh and thank you, Mr. Chairman -- the other Mr. Chairman. I didn't see him sneak back in.

REP. ROY: Tom Criden, followed by Sandy Breslin.

TOM CRIDER: Mr. Chairman, members of the committee. I'm Tom Crider, president of the Southbury Land Trust and I'm here to support the bill 1082, An Act Concerning the Preservation of State-owned Agricultural Land.

To give you a local perspective which you may not have gotten so far in this hearing, for the past ten years the Southbury Land Trust

working with our town boards and commissions, has concentrated on purchasing what little is left of our agricultural land. We've done this because farms promote the economy, provide jobs, protect valuable wildlife habitat and preserve our scenic world land -- landscape. Currently there's about 625 acres of farmland owned by the state at the Southbury Training School in Southbury. It's the largest remaining farm in our town. And I believe you have some written testimony from our first selectman Bill Davis on this point. Town officials are as concerned about this as -- as we are in the Southbury Land Trust.

The study of state-owned farmland mandated in bill 1082 could lead to the preservation of this land which would help fulfill the goals of the town plan of conservation development which gives high priority to farmland preservation. From a state-wide perspective it would also be in keeping with the conservation and development policies plan for Connecticut which states and I quote it is the goal of this plan to maintain and support the viability of the agricultural sector and to increase the -- a long term in-state food producing capacity: one through conservation and preservation of prime agricultural lands and two through the creation of incentives that will continue to support agricultural business.

In recent years the state has spent millions of dollars on the purchase of development rights to Connecticut farms but to date only about 32,000 acres, less than 25 percent of its goal of 130,000 acres, has been preserved. So why not take a look at farmland that the state already owns. With our budget in crisis this bill may show the way to preserve a large amount of farmland at little or no cost.

There aren't many ideas around these days that would cost almost nothing but have a big impact. I urge you to support this bill. Thank you very much for your consideration.

REP. ROY: Thank you, Mr. Crider.

Any questions or comments from members of the committee?

Seeing none, thank you very much. Sandy Breslin.

SANDY BRESLIN: Good afternoon, Chairman Roy, Chairman Meyer, members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today and I'm going to actually follow up on what Mr. Crider said and limit my other remarks on the other many bills you have before you today to -- to written testimony.

SB 793

Audubon strongly supports Senate Bill 1082. We are able to see from the vantage point of our 750 acre bent of the river sanctuary and nature center in Southbury the wonderful ancillary benefits that come for wildlife from the efforts of the Southbury Land Trust to preserve these working farmlands in town and the Southbury Training School is part of what's becoming an uninterrupted swath of protected land that runs from Goodhill Farm up in Roxbury all the way down to the Housatonic River. And I certainly don't have to -- to tell you here in the committee, but from the bird's eye perspective those kinds of protective corridors are exactly what scientists are telling us are very important for the future survival and health of wildlife species.

So we do think that the state has some very valuable farmland in hand. It does offer the

opportunity for a no cost/low cost option to add to our state farmland preservation goal and, in addition, I -- I've been ratcheting back and forth between the other hearing today so I didn't hear the earlier testimony but the farmland advisory board -- the farmland preservation advisory board has indicated their interest in taking on this task and would be willing to do it. So we hope that you will help us to go forward with what will be a study at this point and together with the legislation that you're considering in -- in Senate Bill 798 -- 93 I'm sorry concerning the STEAP grants are -- are sort of very easy and common sense approaches to protecting additional farmland and wildlife habitat as a result. So thank you.

SB 793

REP. ROY: Thank you, Sandy.

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER: Sandy, thanks for your advocacy here. Do you -- do you have an opinion as to whether or not there will be a fiscal note on this bill and if so what the fiscal analysis will show?

SANDY BRESLIN: I don't believe so. What we're -- what we're asking in this bill is just for the farmland preservation advisory board to do a review and I mean to the extent of -- I think it's all doable under available resources so I think consultation with the various agencies would be something that they would do in the normal course of business so I -- I don't anticipate a -- a fiscal note but then again I've been wrong before on that.

SENATOR MEYER: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

Connecticut Chapter
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Hartford, Connecticut 06105
www.connecticut.sierraclub.org

Environment Committee
March 16, 2009
Testimony of Martin Mador
In Support of
SB 793 An Act Concerning STEAP Grants And The Conversion Of Prime Farmland To Nonagricultural Use
SB 995 An Act Concerning Beneficial Refuse, Recycling And Illegal Dumping
SB 1082 An Act Concerning The Preservation Of State-owned Agricultural Land
HB 6660 An Act Authorizing Bonds Of The State For Various State Grant Programs And Concerning The Face Of Connecticut Steering Committee

I am Martin Mador, 130 Highland Ave., Hamden, CT 06518. I am the Legislative and Political Chair of the Connecticut Sierra Club, and am here today representing our 10,000 Connecticut members concerned about the health of our environment, our economic well-being, and the quality of life in Connecticut. I possess a Master's of Environmental Management degree from Yale.

SB 793 ensures that STEAP grants are not used to destroy farmland unless there are no viable alternatives. We lose farmland at an alarming rate: thousands of acres annually. Our quality of life, not to mention our food supply, requires a vibrant farming community in the state. We must pro-actively preserve our remaining farms. To use state funds to convert them to non-agricultural uses would be the depth of bad public policy.

SB 995, section 2, requires that contracts for collection of solid waste much also include provisions for collection of recyclables. This is a valuable incremental step in our efforts to improve recycling rates.

SB1082 directs the Farmland Preservation Advisory Board to conduct a review of state owned farmland with a goal of permanent preservation of such lands.

HB 6660 provides bond funding for the FACE of Connecticut, and calls for annual reporting by the steering committee. Sierra considers the Face of CT an important element in our efforts to preserve open space and farmland and make land use decisions which are environmentally preferable.

CONNECTICUT
FARMLAND
TRUST
PRESERVING WORKING LANDS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

TO: Members of the Environment Committee

FROM: Henry N. Talmage, Executive Director

DATE: March 16, 2009

RE: **Testimony in support of RB #1082: An Act Concerning the Preservation of State-Owned Agricultural Land.**

I am writing to express the Connecticut Farmland Trust's support for RB #1082, "An Act Concerning the Preservation of State-Owned Agricultural Land. The Connecticut Farmland Trust is the state's only private, non-profit organization dedicated exclusively to the preservation of working farmland. We hold agricultural conservation easements on privately owned farms and assist farm families throughout the process of protecting their land. The Trust is a member of the Working Lands Alliance.

The Connecticut Farmland Trust wholeheartedly supports authorizing The Farmland Preservation Advisory Board to conduct a review of the state-owned agricultural land and to make recommendations to permanently protect these properties for agriculture. In 1978 the State Purchase of Development Rights Program was created with the goal of protecting 130,000 acres. To date, less than 35,000 acres have been protected by the state program. The state-owned agricultural land that is appropriate for preservation should be permanently protected using an appropriate method that ensures preservation in perpetuity. These lands could then be added to the protected farmland totals for the state. During these times of extremely tight budget constraints, this represents a way for the State of CT to protect farmland without an impact on the state budget

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.

Henry N. Talmage
Connecticut Farmland Trust
77 Buckingham Street
Hartford, CT 06106
860-247-0202
hntalmage@ctfarmland.org

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Testimony Regarding, **Senate Bill No. 1082,** *An Act Concerning the Preservation of State-Owned Agricultural Land,* Before the Environment Committee, March 16th, 2009.

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, members of the Environment Committee, my name is F. Philip Prelli. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

The Department has **concerns** regarding this bill. The Department has a procedure in place to provide assistance to other state agencies for the leasing of their agricultural lands to farmers. Under C.G.S. 22-6e, *Gardening or agricultural use of vacant public land,* the Commissioner of Agriculture may encourage the use of vacant public land owned by state agencies for agricultural purposes. Regulations have been adopted to carry out the provisions of this program. Presently there are a number of agricultural use agreements with the Departments of Correction and Developmental Services.

As RB 1082 is proposed, the scope of the project is much greater than recognized. The detail is not defined. **It appears there may be hundreds of small parcels of state owned land that may contain farmland soils that could fall under this proposal.** State agencies have their specific individual missions to accomplish. If they have farmlands suitable for agricultural use, we are happy to assist them at their request. It appears that the purpose of this bill is to assure the protection of the Southbury Training School for agricultural use. We are currently finalizing the details of a farm lease with the Department of Developmental Services on a 300 + acre lease of the School (STS). **As stated above, the bill as written would encompass many state agencies and may pieces of state property.**

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SOUTHBURY LAND TRUST, INC.
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Telephone. (203)264-4441 • Email. email@southburylandtrust.org

March 16, 2009

To Members of the Committee on Environment

Re **In Support of Raised Bill No. 1082: An Act Concerning the Preservation of State-Owned Agricultural Land**

For the past 10 years the Southbury Land Trust, working with our town's boards and commissions, has concentrated on preserving what little is left of our agricultural land We've done this because farms promote the economy, provide jobs, protect valuable wildlife habitat and preserve our traditional rural landscape

The approximately 625A of farmland owned by the state at the Southbury Training School is the largest remaining unprotected farmland in our town.

The study of state-owned farmland mandated in Bill 1082 could lead to the preservation of this land, which would help fulfill the goals of our Town Plan of Conservation and Development, which gives high priority to farmland preservation. From a state-wide perspective it would also be in keeping with the Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut which states.

"It is the goal of this plan to maintain and support the viability of the agricultural sector to increase a long-term, in-state food producing capacity: 1) through conservation and preservation of prime agricultural lands, and 2) through the creation of incentives that will continue to support agricultural business "

In recent years the State has spent millions of dollars to purchase the development rights on Connecticut farms, but to date only about 32,000A - less than 25% of its goal of 130,000A - have been preserved

This bill provides a much needed first step toward preserving irreplaceable farmland that the state already owns

In a time of serious budget constraints this offers a way to permanently protect a significant amount of farmland at little or no cost!

TOWN OF SOUTHBURY

OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN

501 Main Street South

Southbury, Connecticut 06488

(203) 262-0647

Fax: (203) 264-9762

TO: Members of the Committee on Environment

FROM: H. William Davis, Jr.
First Selectman Southbury

DATE: March 12, 2009

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF RAISED BILL NO. 1082**

The town of Southbury is committed to the preservation of open space. Southbury's 2002 Plan of Conservation and Development reveals that in 2001 a town-wide survey was conducted by the Planning Commission indicating that 83% of the respondents agreed that the town should do more to preserve open space both for the town and the state. In 1997 the town of Southbury set a long-range goal to preserve 20% of its land over a 15-year period as permanent open space.

Southbury's goal is inline with the State's goal of protecting 130,000 acres of Connecticut's agricultural land. To date only an estimated 32,000 acres have been preserved at a significant cost to the tax payers of Connecticut. This bill suggests a way to permanently protect farmland at little to no cost.

Currently, the state owns an estimated 1,300 acres at the Southbury Training School ("STS") of unprotected farmland. Albeit the State's Farmland Preservation Program continues to be a worthy initiative, a study enumerating steps necessary to preserving such farmland is long overdue.

I appreciate the opportunity as the First Selectman of Southbury to support this noteworthy Bill. Thank you.

Board of Directors

R T (Bob) Eckenrode, *President*
Edward Kelleher, *V President*
Guy Peterson, *Treasurer*
Martha Wright, Secretary
Bill Watts
Brian Hennessey
CaraLeigh Wilson
Wes Gillingham
Coke Cramer
Bart Smith
Dan Dallon

Newtown Forest Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 213
Newtown, CT 06470
203-270-3650

March 13, 2009

RE Raised Bill No 1082 An Act Concerning the Preservation of State-Owned Agricultural Land

To our CT State Elected Officials

On behalf of the officers and board of directors of the NEWTOWN FOREST ASSOCIATION, we would like you to support Bill No 1082 The Town of Newtown is already a beneficiary of some "quasi" preserved State owned properties that are leased for agricultural purposes, however, there is no certainty that this will remain the case in perpetuity Fortunately, the use of this property for agricultural purposes is a great asset to our Town and happens to be located in the immediate vicinity of our sole source aquifer, an area that needs special protection, not development

We know that since the 1970s the State has had a goal of protecting 130,000 acres of Connecticut's agricultural land. In recent years the State has spent millions of dollars to purchase the development rights on Connecticut farms, but to date only about 32,000 acres have been preserved Farmland preservation is given *high priority* in Newtown's Plan of Conservation and Development as well as the Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut.

The State currently owns an estimated 1,300 acres of unprotected farmland In view of the State's policy and goal of protecting significantly more farmland than is currently protected, a study of state-owned land with recommendations for preservation is long overdue. State-held farmlands have historically been subject to Special Acts that transfer these lands to non-state entities for non-agricultural use (In recent years there have been 9 such transfers amounting to 165 acres of farmland converted to non-agricultural uses)

This bill provides a much needed first step toward preserving irreplaceable farmland that the state already owns In a time of serious budget constraints this offers a way to permanently protect farmland at no cost!

Sincerely,

C O (Guy) Peterson, IV, CPA, Treasurer

Connecticut Farm Bureau Association, Inc.
775 Bloomfield Avenue • Windsor, CT 06095-2322
(860) 298-4400 • Fax (860) 298-4408 • www.cfba.org

March 16, 2009

Re: **SUPPORT FOR S. B. No. 1082 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESERVATION OF STATE-OWNED AGRICULTURAL LAND.**

Submitted by: Steven K. Reviczky, Executive Director, Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

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The following testimony is submitted on behalf of the Connecticut Farm Bureau, a statewide nonprofit membership organization of nearly 5,000 families dedicated to farmers and the future of Connecticut agriculture.

Representative Roy, Senator Meyer and members of the Environment Committee,

Connecticut Farm Bureau supports S.B. 1082. The legislation calls for a thoughtful review of state-owned agricultural lands and consideration of permanently protecting state-owned prime and important farmland, where appropriate. The bill envisions a review be conducted by the statutorily constituted State Farmland Preservation Advisory Board and make recommendations to the Commissioner of Agriculture.

The State of Connecticut invests millions of dollars for the purchase of developments rights to agricultural lands every year and supports farming and agriculture through a variety of important programs. Proper review and consideration of the long term use of these state-owned prime and important agricultural lands is an essential component of the State's goal of protecting 130,000 acres of farmland of which 85,000 are targeted to be prime and important farmland soils. Conversion of state-owned farmland to nonagricultural uses takes use further away from this goal. This is a necessary and logical step that Connecticut should take in light of the scarcity state, local and federal dollars.

CT Farm Bureau suggests that Section 1 (2) should be amended to include the Department of Agriculture. The bill should be explicit that the land's use, under the conservation easement, be limited to agriculture as defined in CGS 1-1(q).

CT Farm Bureau respectfully requests your support of S.B. No. 1082 An Act Concerning the Preservation of State-Owned Agricultural Land.

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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING
MARCH 16, 2009

TESTIMONY OF
SANDY BRESLIN, DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
AUDUBON *CONNECTICUT*

IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 1082 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESERVATION OF STATE-OWNED AGRICULTURAL LAND.

IN SUPPORT OF S.B. No. 793 AN ACT CONCERNING STEAP GRANTS AND THE CONVERSION OF PRIME FARMLAND TO NONAGRICULTURAL USE.

Audubon Connecticut, the state organization of the National Audubon Society with more than 10,000 members statewide, works to protect birds, other wildlife and their habitats through education, science and conservation, and legislative advocacy for the benefit of people and the earth's biological diversity. Through our network of community-based nature centers, protected wildlife sanctuaries, and local volunteer Chapters, we seek to connect people with nature and inspire the next generation of conservationists

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, and members of the Environment Committee: thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today in strong support of S.B. 1082 AAC the Preservation of State-Owned Agricultural Land. Audubon Connecticut strongly supports this common sense legislation that will help the state evaluate the potential of permanently protecting 1,300 acres of state-owned working land and the high quality wildlife habitats associated with these areas. On behalf of the more than 10,000 members of Audubon Connecticut statewide, I urge you to ***support*** this legislation.

Connecticut has an untapped treasure of prime, productive farmland at approximately 12 sites across the state where various state agencies own property; a portion of which is leased to farmers and used in active agricultural production. Roughly 1,300 acres of land is farmed in this manner in towns such as Cheshire, Lebanon, Middletown, Newtown, Niantic, Somers/Enfield, and Southbury.

The ability of farmers to continue farming these lands, however, is subject to periodic lease negotiations with agencies as diverse as Department of Public Works, Department of Development Services, Department of Corrections and Department of Agriculture. In addition, in recent years approximately 9 parcels have been transferred from state ownership to non-farm use, taking roughly 160 acres of farmland out of production.

S.B. 1082 charges the newly created Farmland Preservation Advisory Board whose members include representatives from the farm community, Connecticut Farm Bureau, UCONN, CCM, and the Working Lands Alliance to work with the Commissioner of Agriculture to review these parcels of state-held farmland and make recommendations on a strategy for permanently protecting each parcel, including identifying a conservation organization such as local land trusts or other entities to serve as a third party holding development rights on the property.

S.B. 1082 will set the stage for further action and it is our expectation that this legislation will result in a set of no-**cost, low-cost approaches** to conserving more than 1,300 acres of farmland already owned by the State of Connecticut. In these difficult economic times, S.B. 1082 offers the opportunity to make progress toward our farmland conservation goals without expending taxpayer dollars.

For you information, I have attached to this testimony a fact sheet about the Southbury Training School, a state-owned site with roughly 600 acres of active farmland adjacent to the Audubon Center at Bent of the River in Southbury. As you will see from this fact sheet, the site provides significant habitat for a number of bird species. The Training School property is a critical part of a large mosaic of protected land that stretches from Roxbury in the north all the way to the Housatonic River. Such protected corridors are increasingly recognized as critical to the survival and health of many species of birds and other wildlife.

On behalf of the members of Audubon Connecticut, ***I urge the Committee to support S.B. 1082*** and thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important matter today.

S.B. 793 AN ACT CONCERNING STEAP GRANTS

Audubon Connecticut supports S.B. 793 that will ensure that state funds do not go to develop or convert prime agricultural land to nonfarm uses. Closing this loophole will ensure that all state bond funded projects, including those funded by STEAP grants, meet existing state law that requires the Commissioner of Agriculture to review and approve any project that would convert more than 25 acres of farmland to non farm uses in order to determine whether the project promotes agriculture or agricultural land preservation, or if not, that there is no prudent and feasible alternative site for the project.

In 2007, Audubon was contacted by the Council on Environmental Quality to provide avian resource information about two sites in Cromwell and South Windsor proposed for STEAP funded projects that would have converted prime farmland to nonfarm uses. After investigation, it was determined that the areas did not host significant bird populations, however, during this process, CEQ became aware that the projects were being proposed on prime farmland, without undergoing review by the Commissioner of Agriculture. Because of the lump sum bond allocation the State Bond Commission was providing to DECD for STEAP, these projects were not undergoing this review.

Together with S.B. 1098, Audubon Connecticut strongly believes that S.B. 793 will help to better protect one of our state's most rapidly vanishing resources, farmland and the wildlife habitat associated with it. We urge the Environment Committee to support this legislation. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment today. .

Audubon CONNECTICUT

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SB 1082

IMPORTANT BIRD AREA INFO SHEET

Southbury Training School ~900 acres 73° 16' W
Southbury/Roxbury, New Haven County 41° 29' N
Status: Provisional approval, awaiting more information.
Ownership: State of Connecticut Department of Mental Retardation.
Habitats: Primary- Field. **Secondary**- Conifer forest, deciduous forest, shrub, swamp, river/stream, pond/lake.
Land Use: Primary – Institutional/special education, undeveloped, agriculture/livestock. **Secondary** – Hunting/fishing, forestry.
Threats: Serious – Invasive or non-native plants, introduced animals, cowbird parasitism. **Minor** – Predators. **Potential** – Habitat conversion, development, disturbance to birds or habitat, hydrologic changes.
Site Description: Southbury Training School is a state-run facility for the care of the mentally handicapped. The land is occupied not only by patient-care facilities, but also by a large amount of open space and varied habitats including orchards, evergreen stands, patches of deciduous or deciduous-white pine forest, a fresh water pond, and areas of brush, edge and old-field growth. The largest habitat at the site consists of wide expanses of pasture on the grounds of the dairy farm associated with the facility. The pastures are used for cattle grazing, hay, open space, and are occasionally cultivated with crops. Field habitat at the Southbury Training School is ideal for grassland birds.
IBA Criteria: Connecticut Endangered and Threatened species; High Conservation Priority Species; Rare, Unique, or Representative Habitat; 500+ waterfowl (winter)/1000+ waterfowl (staging); Exceptional Concentrations of Migratory Landbirds; Single-species Concentrations (>1%); Long-term research and/or monitoring.
Birds: The pasture habitat at the Southbury Training School is extensive and a suitable breeding/staging area for various grassland birds such as special concern species Eastern Meadowlark and American Kestrel and high conservation priority species Bobolink. It also serves as a feeding area in migration and winter for threatened Horned Larks and large numbers of migratory Canada Geese. Canada Geese as well as various other water birds (Herons, Grebes, Ducks, Gulls) utilize the pond on the premises as it is a valuable staging area during winter and both spring and fall migrations. The brushy fields, orchards and edge strips create a valuable breeding habitat for edge/thicket species Brown Thrasher (special concern) and Eastern Towhee (high conservation priority).
Non-avian Resources: Southbury Training School is a major institutional site providing extended care for patients with mental retardation that need specialized, intensive and often lifelong treatment. Patients are generally severely handicapped. Also a major local employer.

Conservation Issues and measures to address them:
The future fate of the property is in question if the state closes the facility. There is a significant possibility of serious threats of large-scale development if this should occur.
Nominator: Russ Naylor, Connecticut Ornithological Association, American Birding Association, The Nature Conservancy.
State-listed Species:

Species	Breeding	Winter	Migration	Dates
Bald Eagle, E, Fed. E	-	Ave. 2-3 Max. 3-5	Ave. 2-3 Max. 3-5	1988-98
American Kestrel, SC	Ave. 3-5 Max. 6-8	-	3	1988-98
Brown Thrasher, SC	Ave. 6-8 pairs Max. 10-15+ pairs	-	-	1988-98
Common Nighthawk, T	-	-	Spring, fall	1988-98
Northern Harrier E	-	3	Spring, fall	1988-98
Horned Lark, T	-	3	Fall	1988-98
Eastern Meadowlark, SC	Ave. 5-10 Max. 15-20	-	Spring, fall	1988-98
Savannah Sparrow, SC	-	-	Spring, fall	1988-98

Working Lands Alliance
A Project of American Farmland Trust

To Environment Committee

Date Mar 16, 2009

Testimony in regards to

WLA SUPPORTS
S B No 1082 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESERVATION OF STATE-OWNED AGRICULTURAL LAND.

H B No. 6660 (RAISED) AN ACT AUTHORIZING BONDS OF THE STATE FOR VARIOUS STATE GRANT PROGRAMS AND CONCERNING THE FACE OF CONNECTICUT STEERING COMMITTEE

S B No 793 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING STEAP GRANTS AND THE CONVERSION OF PRIME FARMLAND TO NONAGRICULTURAL USE

Submitted by Jiff Martin, Project Director, Working Lands Alliance

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The following testimony is submitted on behalf of the Working Lands Alliance, a statewide coalition of over 600 individuals and 200 businesses and non-profits committed to increasing the state's commitment to farmland preservation.

1. Preservation of State-Held Agricultural Lands
SB 1082 will help the State of Connecticut move pro-actively to permanently protect more than 1300 acres of productive agricultural lands that are currently owned by the State and leased to farmers by the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Developmental Services, and the Department of Corrections. We estimate there are 12 state-held farmland parcels located in the following towns Cheshire, Lebanon, Middletown, Newtown, Niantic, Somers/Enfield, and Southbury (see attached chart)

Although it would appear that state-held farmlands are already protected, in the past decade state-owned farmland parcels have been the subject of Special Acts which transfer ownership to non-state entities for non-agricultural use (In recent years there have been 9 such transfers amounting to 165 acres of farmland converted to non-agricultural uses)

SB 1082 calls on the newly established 12-member Farmland Preservation Advisory Board, which has broad representation of active farmers as well as Connecticut Farm Bureau, University of Connecticut, Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, and Working Lands Alliance The Farmland Preservation Advisory Board, working with the Commissioner of Agriculture, will review the status of the 1300+ acres of state-held farmland and make recommendations on establishing a procedure to permanently conserve each parcel, including but not limited to the

Working Lands Alliance is a project of American Farmland Trust
WokringLandsAlliance org • 860-683-4230 • 775 Bloomfield Ave, Windsor, CT 06095

identification of an appropriate conservation organization(s) to act as the recipient to the development rights transfer The Farmland Preservation Advisory Board has been apprised of this proposal and has agreed formally, by motion at their December meeting, to support this approach to permanently preserving state-held agricultural lands

WLA anticipates that the recommendations of the Farmland Preservation Advisory Board, as required in SB 1082, will provide the basis for new legislation in 2010 that will seek to carry out easement transfers on certain properties (or perform other approaches as recommended).

2. Face of Connecticut – funding

HB 6660 will move the State of Connecticut a step forward toward a comprehensive, well-planned roadmap for making crucial and imperative investments in our future that we must make today HB 6660 will 1) renew bonding commitments for existing state programs in FY2010, and 2) introduce new bonding of $20m to address funding gaps in historic preservation, community farms, and brownfields WLA views this $20m bonding commitment as a vital key to launching the recently created Community Farms Preservation Program (CGS 22-26nn) which currently lacks funding

Farmland protection projects rely heavily on state bonding that matches federal funds and town funds Starting in 2009, Federal match funding over the next five years is expected to increase to $4m to $8m annually, but the State of Connecticut will need funding in place to take advantage of this leverage opportunity. The financial challenges facing the state are similar to those facing farm families who are looking to sell the development rights on their farmland to the state Right now there are 54 farm applications representing almost 6,000 acres of farmland that the state may be able to protect over the next two years!!

***Technical correction to HB 6660*:**

WLA recommends eliminating the underlined text in Section 3 since this is a redundant funding commitment given the contents of Section 1 which formally authorize bonding increases of $12.5 million for the state's Farmland Preservation Program over FY10-FY11 (the Governor's capital budget proposal recommends only $5m which will be insufficient to maintain lump sum bonding mechanism after August 2010)

> "Sec. 3. (*Effective July 1, 2009*) (a) For the purposes described in subsection (b) of this section, the State Bond Commission shall have the power, from time to time, to authorize the issuance of bonds of the state in one or more series and in principal amounts not exceeding in the aggregate ~~fifty million five hundred thousand dollars~~ [forty million five hundred thousand dollars].
>
> The proceeds of the sale of said bonds, to the extent of the amount stated in subsection (a) of this section, shall be used by the following agencies: ~~(1) Ten million dollars by the Department of Agriculture for the purchase of development rights of agricultural land in accordance with chapter 422a of the general statutes;~~ (2) seven million five hundred thousand dollars by the Department of Environmental Protection for the open space and watershed land

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SB 1082

Farmland Preservation Program
State-owned Agricultural Lands
Leases and Transfers 2008

Farmland Preservation Advisory Board Report

State-owned farmland - *as of Jan 2009*

12 parcels (on 7 sites); 1369 acres

Agency	Facility	Town	Lessor	Acres		
DoAg	Savin Farm	Lebanon	DoAG	100		
DoAg	Savin Farm	Lebanon	DoAG	250		
DoAg	Fairfield Hills Hospital	Newtown	DoAG	70		
DoAg	Fairfield Hills Hospital	Newtown	DoAG	87		
DDS	Southbury Training School	Southbury	DDS	575		
DDS	Southbury Training School	Southbury	DPW	50		
DOC	Cheshire Correctional Institution	Cheshire	DOC	46		
DOC	multiple Enfield-Somers Corr F	Somers/Enfield	DOC	60		
DOC	multiple Enfield-Somers Corr. F	Somers/Enfield	DOC	33		
DOC	Gates Correctional Institution	Niantic	DOC	10		
			TOTAL	**1281**		

LOST! - previously state owned farmland

Grantor	Facility	Town	Grantee	Acres		notes
State	Fairfield Hills Hospital	Newtown	Town	23		SA 06-10, Sect 3 - transfer for Fishing Club lease
State	Fairfield Hills Hospital	Newtown	Geckel Cons Foundation	0 86		SA 08-8, Sect 21 - transfer for barn maintenance
State	Fairfield Hills Hospital	Newtown	Town	38		SA 03-19, Sect 16 & PA 05-279, Sect 29 - transfer for commercial industrial park and open space
State	Fairfield Hills Hospital	Newtown	CTDOT	5		taking for road widening and wetland mitigation
State	Fairfield Hills Hospital	Newtown	Town	100' strip		easement to Town of Newtown for brook buffer
State	Fairfield Hills Hospital	Newtown	Town	28		SA 07-11, Sect 29 - transfer for town dog pound (and ambulance facility?)
State	Noank Lab	Groton	Groton	3		land building transfer to Shellfish Coop
State	Norwich State Hospital	Norwich	Town	15		nursery, transferred to Town of Preston Park & Rec
State	Connecticut Valley Hospital	Middletown	Town	53		nursery stock, majority transferred to Town of Middletown