



TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 5475

AAC THE DEVELOPMENT OF HOUSING AND CHALLENGES TO CERTAIN
DECISIONS OF MUNICIPAL AGENCIES

March 13, 2024

To: Co-Chairs Sen. Rahman and Rep. Kavros DeGraw, Vice Chairs Sen. Needleman and Rep. Chafee, Ranking Members Sen. Fazio and Rep. Zullo, and Distinguished Members of the Planning and Development Committee

From: Lori Brown, Executive Director, CT League of Conservation Voters

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding HB 5475.
CTLCV is in strong opposition to section #5 that seeks to bypass Inland Wetlands review for certain development projects.

This provision would "...allow municipalities to adopt ordinances which exempt developments in certain areas from review by the inland wetland agencies of such municipalities."

Section 5 would allow a municipal legislative body to "exempt" certain properties from the Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency review. This politicizes the land use process by bringing the legislative body into the decision and creates "as of right zoning" that excludes inland wetlands review.

The false assumption in the bill is that areas that are already developed won't have additional impacts on wetlands.

One of the values of inland wetlands agencies is that they oversee Erosion & Sediment controls and stormwater in cases where something does not have to go to Zoning but that impacts water quality. Most inland wetland permits are not denied, but they do ensure that certain conditions are met to protect wetlands and watercourses. This includes impacts during construction as well as long term impacts of stormwater (looking at both volume AND quality).

We respectfully request that the committee remove language from HB 5475 that exempts any development from inland wetland review. Including this language would be a significant rollback of our existing environmental laws. Thank you.

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