



TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 6868

AA Enhancing Environmental Permitting Predictability

March 3, 2025

To: Honorable Co-Chairs Sen. Lopes and Rep. Parker, and Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to the Governor's bill, **HB 6868**. This type of bill surfaces every few years to exempt certain projects from environmental laws in the name of expediting development.

For fifty years, our state and federal laws have effectively improved our air and water quality, as well as protecting open space and habitat. Given how the entire federal system of environmental regulation is under attack, this is a particularly bad time to consider weakening our basic safety net laws.

According to testimony by Save the Sound, DEEP's existing Rules of Practice already address all the situations in HB 6868. This bill will only create confusion, uncertainty, and unnecessarily limit the public's ability to participate and provide input for DEEP's environmental decision-making.

In addition to this latest effort to bypass environmental protection procedures and public input, the legislature is also being asked to disregard our state's most essential core environmental law, the CT Environmental Protection Act, referenced in another bill before this committee, **HB 6249**.

And beyond that, there is legislation pending to allow violators of environmental laws to determine whether or not they must comply with DEEP's Consent Orders. Consent orders are agreements for the violator to mitigate the pollution or other damage they have caused in order to avoid further punitive action. The provisions to weaken DEEP's ability to enforce

Consent Orders contained in **HB 6455** has been soundly and wisely rejected every year but is back in the Environment committee once again. Please see CTLCV's written testimony opposing HB 6455.

This triple threat is dangerous and puts the future of all our natural resources at great risk.

In an era where the federal government is trying to roll back environmental protections and give free reign to powerful industry and development interests across the nation, we need strong state laws and elected leaders to be our firewall against these attacks.

CTLCV urges you to **reject** HB 6868, HB 6249, and HB 6455.
Thank you for considering our comments.

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