



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 6831
AAC TRANSIT-ORIENTED COMMUNITIES
February 3, 2025

To: Co-Chairs Sen. Rahman and Rep. Kavros Degraw, and Distinguished Members of the Planning & Development Committee

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 6831 to advance **Transit-Oriented Communities** and simultaneously provide **community resiliency**.

CTLCV hopes to support this bill because it promotes smart growth/TOD, it is not mandatory, and it recognizes Inland Wetlands law as important.

However, Section 1 (a) (1) of HB 6831 includes reference to CGS 7-131d-k, which is the Open Space & Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program. Even with the qualifying language ("to the extent said sections provide financial assistance for municipal sewer projects") we have major concerns about its inclusion in the bill.

We align our comments with those of Amy Paterson (CT Land Conservation Council) and Denise Savageau (CT Council on Soil and Water Conservation) and ask that the above referenced provision in the bill be removed.

HB 6831 provides another zoning tool for land use planners to create transit-oriented development that encourages housing and services to be built around public transportation to reduce sprawl and reliance on cars.

It is critical for planners to incorporate environmental standards into the program, including inland wetlands and watercourse protection.

Inland wetlands provide critical services and are nature-based solutions for climate change mitigation. They not only sequester carbon but provide flood storage, drought resilience and improve water quality. They are important for stormwater management, particularly in areas of increased housing density.

HB 6831 must ensure that the local inland wetlands and watercourses agencies are consulted during the design of transit-oriented communities and that they may hold public hearings as necessary.

This important provision makes certain that applications address stormwater management and urban street flooding resulting in better development patterns that keep affordable housing residents and local communities safe.

Thank you for considering these comments as the Planning & Development Committee works to shape sustainable and resilient communities that include affordable housing without compromising environmental standards or our existing open space programs.

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