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Testimony of Eric Hammerling, Executive Director, Connecticut Forest & Park Association

<b>Public Hearing Subject Matter</b>	<b>Position</b>
<b>Raised SB 1146:</b> AAC REVISIONS TO VARIOUS PROGRAMS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.	Support, especially Sections 10 & 11

The Connecticut Forest & Park Association (CFPA) is the first nonprofit conservation organization established in Connecticut in 1895. For over 128 years, CFPA has offered testimony before the General Assembly on various State Park and Forest, trail recreation, sustainable forestry, and land conservation issues.

I want to thank the Committee for raising SB 1146, in particular Sections 10 and 11 which provide technical revisions to the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition (OSWA) statutes. Specifically, the language in Sections 10 and 11 would help land trusts and other eligible OSWA applicants more efficiently leverage match funding and expedite the closing process when combining OSWA state grants with other sources of funding (federal, municipal, or private) for local land conservation projects.

I serve as co-Chair (along with Amy Paterson of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council) of the State Natural Heritage, Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Review Board, which advises DEEP on implementation of OSWA. The non-controversial technical language fix in Sections 10 and 11 was developed in consultation with the Board, with DEEP's land acquisition and management office, and with the Attorney General's office. We hope this technical language fix will receive your strong support.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on this important bill.