

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Stripp Introduces Funding for Open Space Purchases



State Representative John E. Stripp, R-135th District today introduced a bill to set aside money for open space. *HB-6913 An Act Concerning A Set-Aside From The Real Estate Conveyance Tax For The Purchase Of Open Space* which would set aside 10% of the amount a town receives from the real estate conveyance tax, and use the amount for the town's purchase of open space within the town.

The state increased the municipal portion of the real estate conveyance tax in 2003 as a temporary measure but is still on the books. Municipalities have come to rely on the real estate conveyance tax to cover ordinary operating expenses. This bill will move them toward investing these funds in the capital investment of open land.

Rep. Stripp's proposal would permit a set aside of 10% from the real estate conveyance tax collected by the municipalities to continue efforts to preserve open space, ensure that our children's children will be able to experience Connecticut's heritage as a rural and agricultural state.

In 1998, the General Assembly overwhelmingly approved the Governor's plan to preserve 21% or 673,210 acres of Connecticut's land for open space and recreational use by the year 2023. The program distinguishes between two different types of open space based on ownership – land owned by the state and land owned by towns, land trusts and water companies. Towns, like Easton, Redding and Weston continue to lead the way in acquisition in open space.

Rep. Stripp's said "This bill helps continue the effort to add hundreds of thousands of acres in protected open space."