



January 24, 2018

Senator Karen Spilka, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Room 212
State House
24 Beacon St.
Boston, MA 02133

Andrew Gottlieb
Executive Director

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RE: Support for The Public Lands Preservation Act, S2181

Dear Chairwoman Spilka:

The Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC) writes to express its strong support for S.2181, The Public Lands Preservation Act (PLPA), and urges the Senate Committee on Ways and Means to issue a favorable report on the bill as soon as possible.

Founded in 1968, APCC is the Cape Cod region's leading nonprofit environmental advocacy and education organization. APCC's mission is to promote policies and programs that protect and enhance the Cape's natural resources, with its efforts focused on the protection of groundwater, surface water and wetland resources, the preservation of open space, the promotion of responsible, planned growth, and the achievement of an environmental ethic.

Although Cape Cod is famed for its scenic vistas, efforts to preserve our natural habitats and open spaces have had difficulty keeping pace with the intense development pressure that occurred over the last several decades. Today, only about 13 percent of the Cape remains undeveloped and unprotected. Ensuring that the Cape's hard-earned land conservation achievements will not be eroded by future competing demands is a high environmental, economic and community character priority for the region.

That is why adoption of the PLPA is critically important to Cape Cod, as it is to the rest of Massachusetts. The PLPA would set in place a practical procedure for replacing Article 97 land proposed for disposition with land of comparable natural resource value, acreage and location. It would establish a process for prior notification to EOEEA on the review of proposed land changes, increase transparency and efficiency in the decision-making process for land disposition, and provide potential cost savings for municipalities and state agencies.

Most importantly, the bill would help maintain a no net loss of our state's constitutionally protected Article 97 lands, which are preserved for the benefit of the public and dedicated for use as conservation, parks, forests, watersheds and other natural resource protection purposes. These public lands serve a vital role in protecting wildlife habitat, keeping our water and air clean, providing recreational opportunities, promoting tourism, bolstering the state's economy and improving quality of life.

482 Main Street | Dennis, MA 02638

Tel: 508-619-3185 | info@apcc.org | www.apcc.org

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forward with a positive recommendation. Thank you for your consideration of this important bill.

Sincerely,



Andrew Gottlieb
Executive Director

cc: Sen. Julian Cyr
Sen. Viriato deMacedo