

Western Connecticut COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



February 14, 2023

Esteemed Chairs Kavros Degraw and Rahman,
Members of the Planning and Development Committee:

The Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG) appreciates the opportunity to comment on Raised Bill 6647, *An Act Concerning the State Plan of Conservation and Development* (PoCD).

At the local and regional level, the adoption of a PoCD is a legislative act, being done so by a board or council of elected officials. The State PoCD has followed a similar adoption process, with the General Assembly adopting the PoCD. Bill 6647 would change this by stipulating that the PoCD go into effect if not acted on by the legislature within 120 days of submission. Because the legislature only meets periodically, however, the bill would allow an administration to sidestep legislative approval by submitting the plan when the legislature is not in session. In doing so, the bill leaves it to the executive to determine the formal role (if any) of the General Assembly in the plan process and whether its adoption should be an executive or legislative act.

If it is not the intent of Bill 6647 to remake the PoCD into an expression of executive branch policy, language elucidating this may benefit the bill. If, on the other hand, that is the intent of the bill, then a longer and more probing discussion about the impacts of such a significant change is, in WestCOG's view, warranted – especially if the state PoCD is also to play a larger role in the future.

Should you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Francis R. Pickering". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Francis R. Pickering
Executive Director