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Connecticut River Conservancy

18 February 2025

To: House Legislative Administration Committee,

RE: Testimony Opposing HB314

Dear Members of the House Legislative Administration Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC) to express **our strong opposition to House Bill 314 (HB314)**, which seeks to prohibit the use of federal, state, or local funds for lobbying activities. As an organization dedicated to protecting and restoring the Connecticut River and its tributaries, we believe this bill poses significant challenges to our mission and the broader environmental advocacy community.

Impact on Environmental Advocacy

HB314 would restrict the ability of organizations like CRC to engage in essential advocacy efforts aimed at influencing legislation and policy decisions that affect the health of the Connecticut River. Our work often involves collaborating with policymakers to secure funding for river restoration projects, advocating for water quality standards, and addressing threats such as invasive species and climate change. Limiting our capacity to engage in these activities would undermine our effectiveness and the well-being of the river ecosystem and surrounding communities.

Potential Unintended Consequences

While the intent behind HB 314 may be to promote transparency and prevent misuse of public funds, the bill's broad language could inadvertently restrict legitimate advocacy efforts by nonprofit organizations. This could lead to reduced public input in the legislative process and diminish the role of civil society in shaping policies that impact environmental and public health.

Conclusion

The Connecticut River Conservancy (formerly the Connecticut River Watershed Council) is a non-profit established in 1952 that advocates for the protection, restoration, and sustainable use of the Connecticut River and its four-state watershed. We urge the committee to consider the potential negative impacts of HB314 on environmental advocacy and public participation. We respectfully request that the committee vote **Inexpedient to Legislate on HB314** to ensure that organizations like ours can continue to advocate effectively for the protection and restoration of the Connecticut River and its tributaries.

Thank you for considering our perspective, and we look forward to working collaboratively to implement solutions that are environmentally sound and economically just for New Hampshire. Please reach out to me at mharrisvincent@ctriver.org or 603-503-0419 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Marilla Harris-Vincent
River Steward, NH
Connecticut River Conservancy