



CITY OF NEW BRITAIN
NEW BRITAIN, CONNECTICUT
WATER DEPARTMENT



STATEMENT OF POSITION
CITY OF NEW BRITAIN BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS
PLEASE SUPPORT RAISED BILL #5903

March 12, 2008

TO: All members
Public Health Committee

FROM: Gilbert J. Bligh
Director of Water

On behalf of the City of New Britain Board of Water Commissioners I would like to express our support for raised bill #5903 whose Statement of Purpose is to "require the Commissioner of Public Health to study current restrictions pertaining to the sale, lease, assignment or change in use of class I and class II lands."

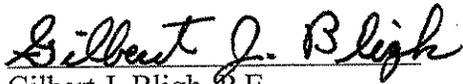
The City of New Britain Board of Water Commissioners provides water through direct service, or wholesale service, to five neighboring municipalities. It owns and manages a total of 6,381.17 acres of land in the towns of New Britain, Berlin, Plainville, Bristol, Burlington, Wolcott and Southington. Nearly all of the land needed for the future development of a Lamson Corner dam and reservoir in Burlington is owned by the New Britain Water Department.

The following listed items illustrate the negative impact current statutes have on the City of New Britain Board of Water Commissioners and any other regional municipal water provider:

1. Section 25-37c currently does not allow for the sale, lease, assignment or change in use of any class I or II land to allow for improvements and activities necessary for the provision of a safe and adequate supply of potable water or to facilitate the development of new public water supplies.
2. The last reservoir the City of New Britain built was Wasel Reservoir in 1966. The excavation of class I and II watershed land and the removal of earthen materials was necessary to build this reservoir, which now holds 36% of the City's total water supply. Section 25-32 of the general statutes does not allow the Commissioner of Public Health to grant a permit for the lease of the land or sale of its earthen materials. Even though a written agreement to assign the right to remove earthen materials to a buyer would be needed to construct Wasel Reservoir if it were to be built today.

3. As part of last year's legislation, we submitted legislation for the creation of a potential new water storage reservoir with three times the capacity of New Britain's Shuttle Meadow Reservoir. The reservoir would be formed by utilizing the existing basin created by the Tilcon quarry in Plainville along with 131 acres of New Britain watershed land located to the south. The removal of earthen materials would take approximately forty years in order to form the complete storage reservoir. A 40-year lease or temporary assignment of this watershed land would be required to accomplish such a long-term civil engineering project. Section 25-37c currently does not allow for the sale, lease, or assignment of this land.
4. If completed, the new storage reservoir would have a volume of 4.74 billion gallons. Such an enormous water storage basin would be a regional natural resource. Although the contributing watershed area is too small to completely refill the reservoir, this limiting factor could be overcome by importing water from the proposed Lamson Corner Reservoir mentioned above.

The City of New Britain Board of Water Commissioners urges the Public Health Committee to adopt Raised Bill #5903. Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.



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