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Environment Committee
Room 3200, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: 860-240-0440

Support for S.B. No. 500 AN ACT CREATING A REBUTTABLE PRESUMPTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF CERTAIN INLAND WETLANDS PERMITS.

Mr. Chairman
Members of the Environment Committee

My name is Jeffrey S. Bond; I am a resident of Burlington Connecticut and a member of Burlington Volunteer Fire Department. I would like to support S.B. No. 500 AN ACT CREATING A REBUTTABLE PRESUMPTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF CERTAIN INLAND WETLANDS PERMITS.

The purpose of this Bill is to facilitate the inland wetlands activity permit process for a dry hydrant and dedicated water resource if there is no alternative access to a public water supply. This proposed legislation does not change the inland wetlands application process for dry hydrant permits but simplifies the permit process.

Dry hydrants are permanent structures placed into a water resource, (lake, pond or stream) that enables many State of Connecticut fire departments to access water for fire suppression. In many parts of the State, there are no public water supplies. Fire departments, many of them volunteer, must rely on water from portable tankers, ponds, or streams to provide the water necessary to put out a structure fire. Recently a fire in Simsbury required an estimated 90,000 gallons of water, over 800 gallons per minute to provide for fire fighter safety and fire suppression.

A dry hydrant provides the fire department access to large volumes of water everyday. These structures are placed below the established frost and ice margins enabling them to be used in every season. They provide a reliable water resource to the fire officer, reduce homeowner insurance rates, provide for fire fighter safety and keep large fire tanker trucks from multiple emergency trips to and from a dedicated water resource.

An example of the current process for obtaining an inland wetlands permit for a dry hydrant has five phases. 1. Identifying a water resource that can be used by the fire department for a dry hydrant (obtaining property owner permission) 2. Engineering and completing the inland wetlands permit. 3. Attend the inland wetlands commission meeting reviewing the site permit application. 4. Participate in the public hearing regarding the application. 5. Construction of the

dry hydrant (if approved and a permit is granted). In many areas of State, this process is driven from the local volunteer fire department. Most departments do not have the technical expertise or the availability to attend multiple inland wetlands meetings. We have dedicated our time to protecting the community and to the fire service. We see dry hydrants as a necessity not an option for public and firefighter safety.

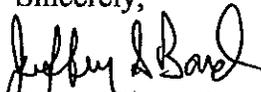
The intent of this legislation is to maintain the local inland wetlands permit application process. When an application permit for a dry hydrant is deemed complete, a rebuttable presumption for approval will then exist. Currently, variations in local inland wetlands regulations delay the permit process and inhibit the development of these dry hydrants.

S.B. No. 500 is designed to facilitate and increase the development of dry hydrants in Connecticut. It does not bypass the inland wetlands application process. It does provide for a more efficient permit process that increases Public Safety.

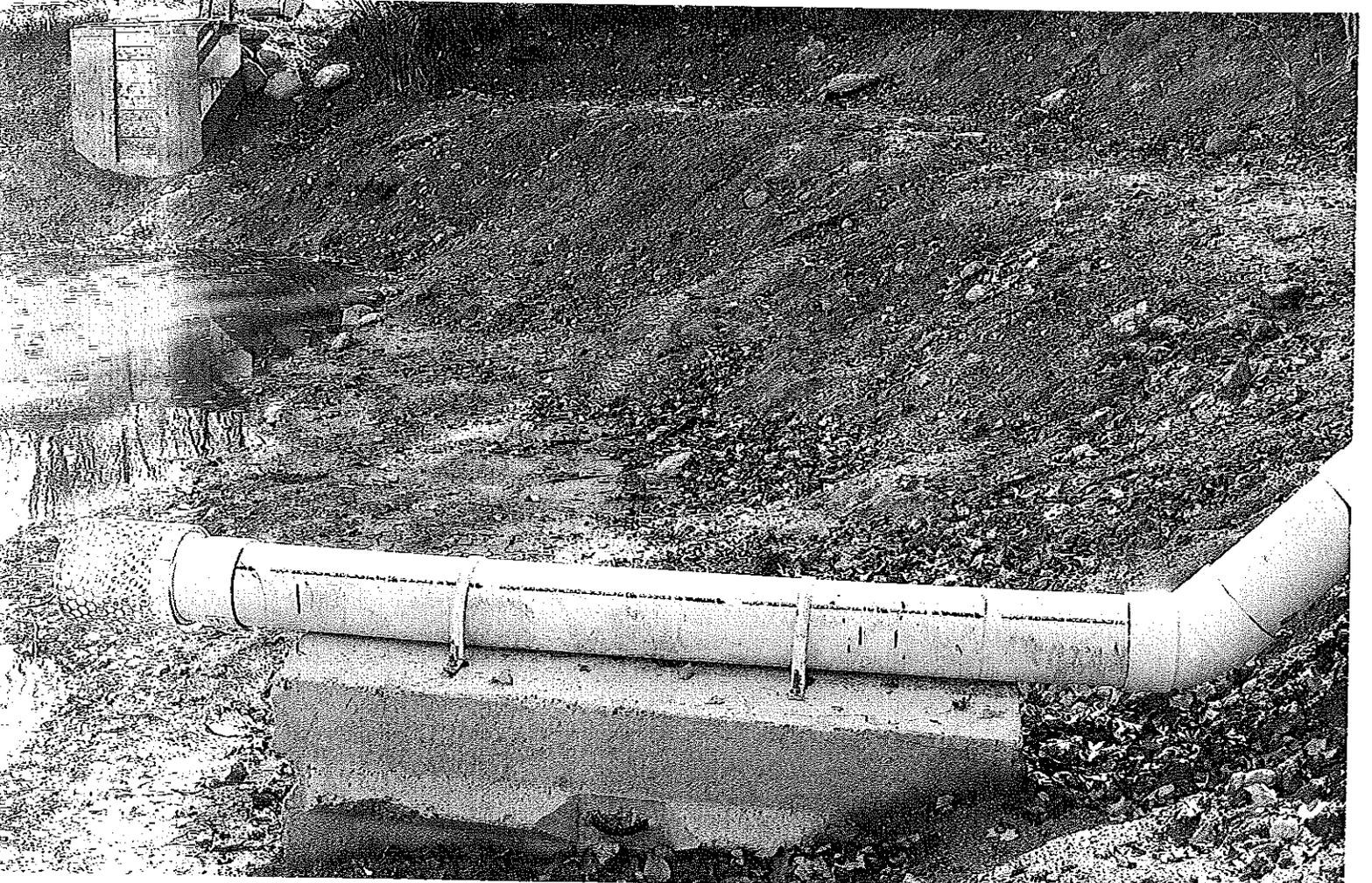
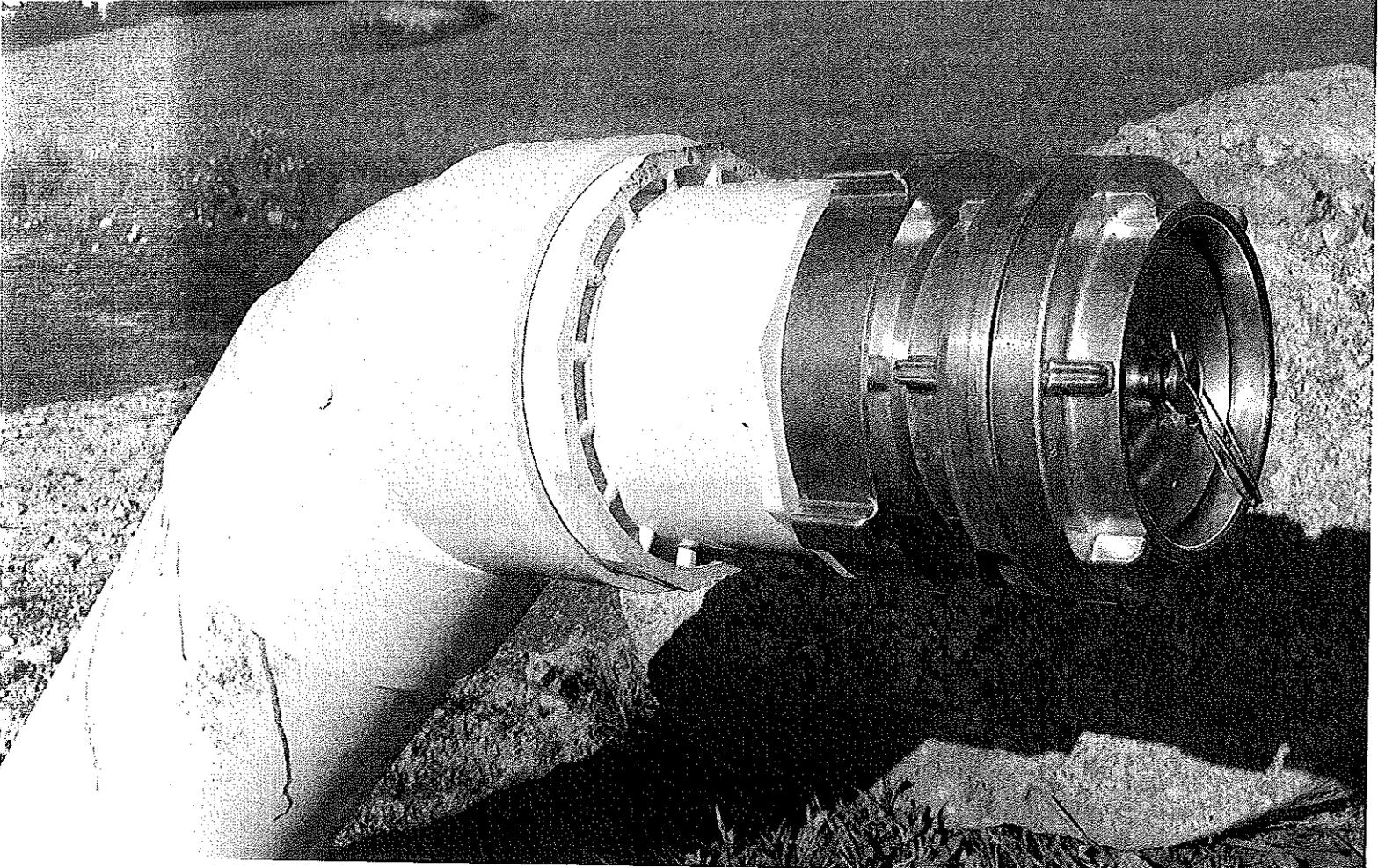
Finally, it is budget neutral and does not change current fee structures.

In 2007, the 242 Connecticut Fire Departments submitted loss reports in excess of \$56,000,000. There were 235 reports of civilian injuries and 25 civilian deaths. Please support your local fire services by supporting S.B. No. 500.

Sincerely,


Jeffrey S. Bond

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Crews Battle Rural Stafford Fire *Firefighters Bring In Water Amid Lack Of Hydrants*

POSTED: 11:25 pm EST February 20, 2009
UPDATED: 12:35 am EST February 21, 2009

STAFFORD, Conn. – A lack of fire hydrants proved to be a challenge for firefighters battling a Friday night blaze in a rural section of Stafford.

The blaze broke out on Chestnut Hill Road at about 8 p.m.

Firefighters said when they arrived, the home was engulfed in flames and that crews couldn't immediately get inside the building.

The fire chief said he believes the blaze began near the center of the house.

About 50 firefighters from the Stafford area responded to the blaze. They said the lack of hydrants in the rural area meant extra man power and equipment had to be called in.

"We bring in water, actually DOT came and salted the road," said West Stafford Fire Chief Joe Lorenzelli.

Fire officials said several pets were rescued from inside the home. No one was injured.

The cause of the fire remains under investigation.

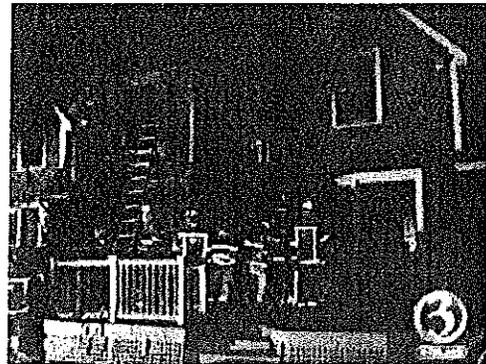
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