

Mark Decker  
Colchester Water Department  
Town of Colchester  
Public Health Committee  
March 6, 2009

The Colchester Water Department urges your **support for HB-6617, An Act Concerning Water Supply Plans.**

This bill will reduce unnecessary costs associated with filing cumbersome water supply plans every 3 – 5 years. It will also reduce state costs by extending the timeframe for filing and reviewing the plans from 5 to 10 years. Filing a plan every ten years make more sense inasmuch as the document is a long-range planning tool based on a 50-year planning window.

Preparing the plan requires municipal water departments like Colchester to devote countless hours of staff time to the project as well as retain an outside consultant, at considerable cost to the town. During these difficult economic times, we need to look for ways to increase efficiency and streamline reporting requirements such as this one.

Although we understand and appreciate that the state Department of Public Health is willing to revise the process for plan submittal to make it more user friendly, the statute must also be revised to extend the timeframe. We often hear about plans that have taken years to receive approval even though very little in the plan has actually changed from the original filing.

As a municipal utility, we also support efforts to include a brief summary of a utility's plans to update their water supply infrastructure. As an industry, we must support infrastructure replacement to ensure that we can continue to provide customers with a safe, adequate supply of potable water.

We therefore recommend that you support his bill, which will reduce municipal and state costs and improve the relevancy of the water supply plan to infrastructure practices.