



**CGA Environment Committee
Public Hearing February 23, 2009**

Support for:

**SB 747 An Act Concerning Consistency In Permitting Requirements For
Alternative On-Site Sewage Treatment Systems
Comments submitted by Cheryl Dunson, VP Public Issues**

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut, a statewide organization with over 2100 members, has a strong position in support of policies and programs that protect our state's drinking water supplies and inland wetlands and watercourses. In addition to our testimony in support of SB 569 AAC Enhancements To The Inland Wetlands And Watercourses Act and HB 5820 AA Conserving Natural Vegetation Near Wetlands And Watercourses, the League urges your support for SB 747 An Act Concerning Consistency In Permitting Requirements For Alternative On-Site Sewage Treatment Systems.

Bill 747 would require the Department of Environmental Protection to consider the same criteria in permitting large systems (over 5000 gallons per day) that the Department of Public Health applies when evaluating applications for smaller alternative on-site systems. The League believes that there should be consistency across agencies when evaluating alternative sewage treatment systems regardless of the size of the proposed system. The proposed criteria include consideration of the cumulative effects on public health, land use and implications for smart-growth when permitting packaged sewage-treatment devices.

All waste treatment systems require maintenance and have finite life spans. While traditional septic systems have a finite life, generally estimated to be about 30 years, failure is localized and not catastrophic. The proliferation of alternative waste treatment systems and community septic in rural areas, given their limited lifespan, clearly will be laying the groundwork for the community to assume responsibility for major, expensive infrastructure repair or replacement in the future. We only need to look at the case of the community septic system failure in Brookfield, and their need to extend sewers to the area served by the failed system as a case in point (DEP Order number WC-5199).

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut urges your support for SB747 to promote consistency in the review of alternative sewage treatment systems.