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Testimony - Public Health Committee
RB 6617 - An Act Concerning Water Supply Plans

Connecticut Water is a privately-owned water utility, serving nearly 90,000 customers or a population of approximately 300,000 in 54 towns throughout Connecticut. We employ approximately 225 people and are proud of our long record of customer service, regulatory compliance and environmental stewardship.

We support RB 6617 *An Act Concerning Water Supply Plans*, as it would streamline and improve the process for water company water supply planning and incorporate an important requirement to include information about a water company's underground infrastructure replacement needs. We endorse the testimony submitted by the Connecticut Water Works Association, and wanted to provide some additional details, specific to our company's experience with water supply plans.

Our company has developed and periodically updated water supply plans, as required by the 1984 public act. We have found it to be an important planning exercise and consider the plans a valuable resource for decision-making. The plans provide important information on the company organizational structure, available water supply sources, system operations, capital spending plans as well as current and projected water supply needs for 5, 20 and 50 year planning horizons. The initial plans were a significant undertaking, as it was the first time such information was compiled in this format, and there was extensive review and comment by the agencies during the approval process. Once the initial water supply plans was approved, the information about our systems, supplies, operations and planning have not really changed significantly.

There continue, however, to be significant expenditures of time and resources to develop the plan updates every five years as required by current law. We have found updating the plans at the current frequency provides minimal additional information or benefit for water supply planning purposes. Our company has several separate, non-contiguous water system operations, so we submit six different water supply plans, each of which is required to be updated on the current five year cycle. With these six different submittals, we essentially have an ongoing process with one or more plans either being updated and/or reviewed by the Department on a continuous basis.

We do not believe this is the best use of our resources or of the staff of the Department of Public Health (DPH) to have updates this frequently, and think the proposal to extend the interval for the plan revisions to ten years would better serve our customers and allow for more effective use of the resources at DPH. We have also had discussions with the Department about limiting what would be required to be included in the plan revisions that could improve the process.

We fully support the inclusion of the infrastructure summary in the plan. Replacing water utility infrastructure is a critical need and responsibility for water companies throughout the country. The assessment in the water supply plan is a critical first step to identify the needs of a system and start to proactively plan to meet those needs before there is a crisis. The legislature passed Public Act 07-239 *AAC Water Company Infrastructure Projects*, which provided a ratemaking tool for private water companies who take up the challenge of replacing aging infrastructure, and this is another key provision to help define the scope of the problem and move that issue forward for water utilities throughout the state.

We urge the committee to adopt RB 6617 and stand ready to work with the Committee, the Department and The Connecticut Water Works Association on this proposal.