



STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



Public Hearing- March 12, 2010
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Amey Marrella
Department of Environmental Protection

Raised Senate Bill No. 383- AN ACT CONCERNING A STATE-WIDE WATER USE PLAN

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Raised Senate Bill No. 383, AN ACT CONCERNING A STATE – WIDE WATER USE PLAN. The Department of Environmental Protection (Department) has several concerns with this bill. This bill would create a new section to the general statutes and require the DEP and the Department of Public Health (DPH) in consultation with the Water Planning Council to develop a state wide water use plan.

The Department sees a number of the requirements of this bill as redundant with many of the requirements included in the long-range planning for the management of our state's water resources codified in sections 22a-352 of the general statutes. Section 22a-352 directs the Department, the DPH, and the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to establish a continuing planning process to prepare and periodically update a state-wide long-range plan for the management of the water resources of the state.

It is important to note that Raised Bill 383 leaves out the participation of the OPM, an important partner in the planning for water resources of the state as it relates to the land use conservation and development policies of the state. The Water Planning Council (WPC) is brought into the planning process through section 25-330 of the general statutes which currently requires the WPC to study water planning and water use issues and report their findings and make recommendations to the General Assembly. The WPC and its member agencies: the Department, DPH, OPM and DPUC have been assessing many water management issues through subcommittee and workgroups. The WPC has issued reports of findings and recommendations for many issues. It also included development of a Water Allocation Planning Model to set forth a water use planning concept to follow.

Based on the above, Raised Bill 383 could have a negative fiscal impact upon the Department. The Department would have to co-establish and participate in a new unfunded process that is already authorized by the general statutes and taking place under the WPC.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Department's views on this proposed bill. If you should require any additional information, please contact the Department's legislative liaison, Robert LaFrance, at (860) 424-3401 or Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov.