

ACEC

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES
of Connecticut

TESTIMONY BEFORE COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT REGARDING THE RAISED BILL 388 March 12, 2010

My name is Paul Brady. I am Executive Director of the American Council of Engineering Companies of Connecticut representing some 100 consulting engineering firms in the state, many of whom provide environmental engineering services for state agencies and municipalities.

ACEC/CT supports increasing the amount of bonding authorized for the state's Clean Water Fund. We recommend that bonding be increase by \$90 million in general obligation bonds and \$180 million in revenue bonds.

It is important to increase funding for the Clean Water program because:

1. These public works projects create construction job for workers here in Connecticut. Their income will result in spending that will, in turn, create other jobs. At the spending indicated above, over 8,000 Connecticut jobs will be created.
2. These programs greatly increase the quality of life in Connecticut. Our failure to address these projects jeopardizes the health and safety of our citizens. When there is a significant rainstorm, many of the storm sewer systems in our cities overflow into the sanitary sewer systems. The result is that thousands of gallons of raw sewage is dumped into our rivers and streams and onto our beaches. In some cases, raw sewage overflows into our streets and into people's homes. This is a health hazard and people can get sick.
3. Older or over-capacity wastewater treatment plants contribute to the decline of Long Island Sound, our rivers, lakes and waterways. These problems impact our quality of life, harm the tourism industry as well as our aquaculture industries (Long Island Sound lobsters and shellfish, for example).
4. Like other important infrastructure issues, inadequate funding over any appreciable length of time will eventually result in higher costs for maintenance, operation and replacement of worn-out equipment.
5. When projects are postponed because of a lack of funding, costs to the residents increase because of rapidly rising material and labor costs. Delaying projects will result in substantially higher costs for the state and for the taxpayers. Let me be clear. We WILL build these projects sooner or later. Many municipalities are under consent decrees. It will be less costly to build them now rather than wait.
6. If antiquated wastewater treatment plants and facilities are at or near capacity, cities and towns may be forced to deny sewer connections, curtailing economic development and new housing.

The current levels of funding are woefully inadequate. This problem will not go away. It is a case of "Pay now or pay later."

We support this initiative and look forward to cleaner and more healthy rivers, lakes and Long Island Sound. Thank you for your time and consideration.