

## **Testimony on Raised Bill 5477, Referred to Committee on Public Health**

To the Committee on Public Health:

We represent several Connecticut towns which have been working diligently to address water pollution concerns through pro-active management of subsurface sewage disposal systems (septic systems). **We object to Raised Bill No. 5477, specifically the insertion of Section 1 (2) into “An Act Concerning the Clean Water Act and Stream Flow Regulations”.**

Our towns, as well as several others in Connecticut, have passed or are in the process of passing local ordinances REQUIRING regular pumpouts of on-site septic systems as part of their Sewer Avoidance Plans. These ordinances have been approved by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and the Connecticut Department of Public Health, as part of a program to remediate existing, and avoid future surface and groundwater pollution. The programs involve sending reminder cards to homeowners to do the appropriate maintenance of a septic system, i.e., a pumpout and inspection at least once every five years. This maintenance schedule is recommended by the EPA, DEP, DPH and professional engineers and installers in the field.

Section 1 (2) could create a conflict with our existing and other future, pumpout ordinances. Local ordinances may be more stringent than the Public Health Code, but it would be misleading to all concerned to have the Department of Public Health prohibited from taking an action that is highly recommended as a means of assuring water quality.

Educated residents understand that a \$250 pumpout every five years may extend the life of their system, prevent a \$10,000 to \$20,000 premature repair AND protect their well water, ground water and local surface waters.

Hidden in a bill ostensibly “concerned” with surface water quality, this section is inappropriate and dangerous to the public health. **Please remove Section 1(2) of this Raised Bill.**

Sincerely,

Mary Jane Engle, Director of Health, Connecticut River Area Health District  
(Towns of Old Saybrook, Clinton, Deep River)

Thad King, Director of Health, Chatham Health District

(Towns of East Hampton, East Haddam, Portland, Marlborough, Hebron, Haddam)

Marilyn Ozols, Westbrook Water Pollution Control Commission