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Connecticut Water Company
Testimony Before the Public Health Committee
March 23, 2011
RE: RB-1203 An Act Concerning Water Protection

Connecticut Water Company would like to provide comments regarding RB 1203, An Act Concerning Water Protection and share concerns about certain sections of the bill. Our company has a long history of regulatory compliance and a proud record of providing safe reliable service to our customers and the communities we serve. We share the goals of the Department of Public Health to protect the State's water supplies and ensure customers receive high quality water and reliable service.

We are concerned, however, that **Section 9** of the proposed bill could negatively affect water companies' ability to maintain an adequate supply of water for public health and safety needs and result in water supply deficiencies in certain areas. We recognize the Department's efforts to protect public water supplies and limit public water use to the most pristine waters of the state but believe such protections must be balanced against the practical realities of meeting the day-to-day water supply needs of an existing population in a heavily developed region of the country and the constraints of other environmental and permitting requirements for new sources. We, therefore, must retain the flexibility of developing new or replacement water supply sources where most practicable – while meeting our obligations to ensure the water delivered to our customers meets all state and federal water quality standards.

Section 9 of the bill requires utilities to conduct analyses on potential threats and permits the Department to deny requests for a new source of water supply based on mere conjecture, not actual water quality results. As an example, Connecticut Water has recently encountered resistance to the installation of critical backup wells in certain established wellfields because of concerns over these same issues – though existing water quality fully meets all applicable water quality standards. Ideally, any such determination as to the suitability of a new or replacement source of water supply should be made following completion of a source of supply and water quality data under actual use conditions, which is clearly provided for under existing statutory and regulatory provisions. Unfortunately, the bill's proposed language could prevent even the installation of a well that could acquire the necessary quality data for a more thorough determination. Furthermore, the bill ignores the feasibility of using existing or accepted treatment, such as granular activated carbon, that could allow for the use of the source in compliance with all state and federal drinking water quality standards.

We **support Section 11** as a practical improvement over the current cumbersome process, which can take 1 - 2 years to gain the necessary regulatory approval to abandon a well that truly deserves abandonment.

Thank you for your consideration. We would be pleased to work with the Committee and the Department on language to achieve the broader goals outlined by the bill.

Connecticut Water Company is a private water company that serves nearly 90,000 customers or more than 225,000 people in 55 towns in Connecticut. We are regulated by the Department of Public Health with respect to the purity and adequacy of our supplies, by the Department of Public Utility Control for rates and quality of service, and by the Department of Environmental Protection for environmental issues. We have 18 surface water supplies and 214 groundwater sources that serve our customers.

**For additional information or questions on our testimony please contact:
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