



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



Public Hearing – March 7, 2011
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Acting Commissioner Susan Frechette
Department of Environmental Protection

**Raised House Bill No. 6505 – AN ACT CONCERNING STREAM FLOW
REGULATIONS**

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Raised Bill No. 6505 – AN ACT CONCERNING STREAM FLOW REGULATIONS. The Department of Environmental Protection (Department) supports this bill.

Science clearly shows us that groundwater and surface water are inextricably connected, as part of the water cycle. Groundwater and surface water are part of the same water resource system, with water continually moving between these two parts of the system. Groundwater withdrawals can and do affect streamflow and surface waters, and must ultimately be considered and managed within the context of comprehensive streamflow regulations.

The Department continues to work with numerous stakeholders and other state agencies to adopt regulations that strive to achieve the balance set forth in the existing statute. The Department originally included groundwater withdrawals in the overall regulatory framework because we read the existing statutory language to include groundwater. However through the formal regulation adoption process, the inclusion of groundwater and the intent of the existing statute became an ongoing issue. Based on that, the Department removed the section addressing groundwater withdrawals from the proposed regulations when the regulations were resubmitted to the Regulations Review Committee in December of 2010. We are continuing to work with stakeholders to complete the regulation adoption process for the narrowed regulation and do not anticipate that this bill would impact that process.

However, should this bill become law, the Department would commence a new regulation adoption process at some time in the future that would include the regulation of groundwater.

A streamflow diagram is included with this testimony for your convenience, provided by U.S. Geological Survey. It may also be viewed at the following link:

http://health.usgs.gov/geohealth/images/flow_path_fig.png

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Department's views on this proposal. 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.

