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CONNECTICUT

TESTIMONY OF
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS (NFIB)
BY
RICK WILLARD, CHAIRMAN, NFIB/CONNECTICUT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
OPPOSING
HB-6505, AN ACT CONCERNING STREAM FLOW REGULATIONS
BEFORE THE
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
MARCH 7, 2011

A non-profit, non-partisan organization founded in 1943, NFIB is Connecticut's and the nation's leading small-business association. In Connecticut, NFIB represents thousands of members and their employees and membership is scattered across the state and ranges from sophisticated high technology enterprises to single-person "Mom & Pop" shops that operate in traditional ways. NFIB's mission is "To promote and protect the right of its members to own, operate, and grow their businesses." On behalf of those small- and independent- job-providers in Connecticut, I offer the following comments:

NFIB/Connecticut strongly *opposes* HB-6505, which seeks to undermine and usurp the clear legislative intent of P.A. 05-142 by attempting to expand and redefine the scope of the Department of Environmental Protection's proposed Stream Flow Standards and Regulations (RCSA §§ 26-141b-1 to 26-141b-9, inclusive) to include the regulation of groundwater.

Although well-intentioned, NFIB/Connecticut feels that DEP's proposed stream flow regulations are far-reaching and will undermine Connecticut's already struggling economy and quality of life by severely limiting the amount of water available to meet the public health, safety, economic development and agricultural needs of Connecticut's small businesses. Small businesses such as farmers, car washes, restaurants, laundry mats, nurseries and plumbing contractors all rely on a safe, adequate supply of potable water to operate their businesses and meet the needs of their customers. Homebuilders, realtors, excavation contractors, heavy equipment operators, and others all rely on a robust economy where there is certainty about the ability for expansion and new construction and development to take place. Suddenly and without merit including groundwater into the proposed regulations would dramatically and significantly reduce the amount of water available to meet these needs; and small businesses are concerned that the ultimate impact of such would be potential moratoriums on construction and economic development, and most certainly significant rate increases.

NFIB/Connecticut has remained hopeful as the regulatory process has played out that the regulations would not adversely impact the safe yield requirements of public water systems that would hamper economic development. Unfortunately, HB-6505 would do exactly that, and at a time when the state and its small businesses can least afford it.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and NFIB/Connecticut urges rejection of the bill.

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