



State of Connecticut

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Testimony

Good morning Senator Richard Meyer, Senator Andrew Maynard, Senator Andrew Roraback, Representative Roy Richard, Representative Phillip Miller, Representative Clark Chapin and distinguished members of the Environment Committee.

I would like to thank you for raising S.B. 88, *An Act Concerning the Public's Right to Know of a Sewage Spill*.

The purpose of this bill is to establish a process for informing the public about sewage spills that can have public health and environmental implications. The bill will grant the public access to notifications about sewage overflows, and allow them to make safe choices, and avoid unnecessary exposure to harmful pollution.

Many of Connecticut's Sewage Treatment plants were damaged, due to Tropical Storm Irene. An example of this is, in August of 2011, 13 Sewage Treatment Plants discharged untreated sewage into local waterways; and at least one of these did not resume treatment until a week after the storm. Studies have shown that between 1.8 and 3.5 million Americans become ill annually from contact with recreational waters contaminated by sewage.

This is a number that can be greatly reduced by simply granting citizens the right to know when such contaminates occur. Connecticut has always been a pioneer in environmental safety, and once again it is time to pass new legislation that will keep our families safe.

Thank you for your consideration.