



**Testimony
Elizabeth Gara
Connecticut Water Works Association
Before the
Energy Committee
February 21, 2013**

RE: SB-888- An Act Concerning Wireless Broadband

The Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA), which represents municipal, private and regional water utilities, *supports Section 2 of SB-888* which adds telecommunications towers and ancillary equipment to the structures permitted in watershed under certain circumstances.

As stewards of the state's water resources, Connecticut water companies are committed to protecting watershed lands to preserve the adequacy and purity of the state's public water supplies. Recognizing the importance of protecting the state's public water supplies, current law, unchanged by this proposal, imposes significant restrictions on the sale, lease or change of use of Class I and Class II lands.

Pursuant to Section 25-32, the state Department of Public Health (DPH) can only permit the sale of class I land to another water company, a state agency, a municipality or, under limited circumstances, a land conservation organization such as a land trust. In addition, DPH can grant a permit for a change in use of class I land only if the applicant demonstrates that the change will not significantly harm the present and future purity and adequacy of the drinking water supply and is consistent with the applicable water supply plan.

Similarly, DPH can only grant a permit for the sale, lease, assignment, or change in use of class II land if the applicant demonstrates, among other things, that (1) the proposed action will not significantly harm the purity and adequacy of the public drinking water supply and (2) any use restrictions

Current law specifies that these restrictions do not preclude leasing watershed land for radio towers or telecommunications antennas. Section 2 of the bill simply adds telecommunications towers, ancillary equipment or related access drives and utilities to the structures permitted in a watershed, subject to DPH approval.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of SB-888.

The Connecticut Water Works Association, Inc. (CWWA) is an association of private, municipal and regional public water supply utilities serving more than 500,000 customers, or population of about 2½ million people, located throughout Connecticut.

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