



Connecticut Department of
**ENERGY &
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Public Hearing – February 13, 2013
Planning and Development Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Dan Esty
Presented By Deputy Commissioner Macky McCleary

**Proposed Senate Bill No. 705 – AN ACT EXPANDING THE POWERS OF MUNICIPAL STORMWATER
AUTHORITIES**

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Proposed Senate Bill No. 705 – An Act Expanding the Powers of Municipal Stormwater Authorities. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) supports this preliminary proposal and welcomes the opportunity to offer the following testimony.

Stormwater authorities have provided municipalities and counties across the country with the ability to maintain and improve their stormwater infrastructure for over twenty years now. In a region with the oldest public infrastructure in the nation, New England is actually the last area of the country to adopt this method of ensuring the protection of our waters and citizens from the impacts of an aging and inadequate stormwater infrastructure. In the last few years our neighbors in Vermont, Maine and Massachusetts have begun to implement these programs as a means of providing this protection as well as complying with the EPA mandate for permitting municipal storm sewer systems.

A stormwater authority, also called a utility, works in much the same manner as a water and sewer utility. With a dedicated utility fee (generally less than \$100 per year per household), a municipality is provided with the resources to make repairs and improvements to address flooding and water quality issues related to the discharge of pollutants such as metals, oil & grease, and bacteria. The key to the success of a stormwater utility is the establishment of a system and fund that is distinct from the municipal general fund and that is not subject to the fluctuations and budget issues that may affect a municipal general fund. Also, by placing stormwater expenditures in a separate fund, the general fund (and, therefore, the property tax rate) is relieved of the pressure to pay for these critical stormwater needs. Therefore, having a dedicated utility is a progressive and effective mechanism for long-term planning and accountability for stormwater infrastructure and managing water quality concerns related to storm sewer discharges including the EPA-mandated municipal stormwater permitting program.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the DEEP's views on this proposal. We would be happy to work with the Committee on the drafting of a more fully developed bill. If you should require any additional information, please contact the DEEP's legislative liaison, Robert LaFrance, at (860) 424-3401 or Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov.