

SUPPORT FOR
RAISED BILL NO. 6537

My name is Arthur Smith, I am a resident of the Town of Mansfield. I want to begin by thanking you, Chairman and members of the Committee on the Environment for giving me the opportunity to express my support for this drafted legislation- Bill 6537.

It is not the first time that legislation has been drafted to address the issue of whether the University of Connecticut should be considered a water company, with water company obligations regarding land development, and regulated as such. Similar legislation was proposed over ten years ago, but was unsuccessful. But the Mansfield Community quest for the University of Connecticut to practice responsible water stewardship, continues to be an on-going struggle. I join many other members of the Mansfield community who strongly believe that stewardship by Consent Order or litigation settlement is an unworthy practice for a public institution of higher learning such as the University of Connecticut, and that if we let stewardship history repeat itself at the university, it is at our own peril, both as local residents and citizens of the state. Residents remain while university administrators leave and follow their individual career paths to other sites.

We have a history of the University of Connecticut and the contamination of town resident well water. I have attached volume one of the federal EPA comprehensive environmental response liability site file for your review. It documents alarming indifference to environmental hazards. Local residents remember the rates of cancer in the contaminated area. Please take the time to review them. For further information, Nancy Smith, a Remedial Project Manager for the Connecticut Region, may be contacted at (617) 918-1436.

We have a history of UCONN overuse of our local waterways to the extent that the Fenton River was pumped to hazardously low levels killing an untold number of fish and impeding, and at places stopping, that river's flow.

We have a history of UCONN storage of hazardous waste on a local watershed; it continues to this day despite local outcry.

We have a history of UCONN, as a neighbor who is unwilling to tell local residents whether Bio-Safety Level 3-4 laboratory research will be conducted in the proposed \$170,000,000 Technology Park being constructed. Yet, water strategies at the university emphasize water reuse. What filtering systems for water reuse are being considered if viral research is being contemplated on strains that have no known containment outside of the laboratory? Local residents are left in the dark.

Bill 6537 is a step in the right direction, it does not answer all of the questions, but it is a good start. Connecticut needs a statewide water plan, wherein local water sustainability is an integrated component of statewide economic development plans. The degradation of our water supply threatens the neurological health of our children, our children's children and generations to come. History need not repeat itself here. As good stewards of the environment, support the passage of Bill 6537. Thank you, any questions.

