



CCM 2014 Testimony

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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

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The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 92% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

HB 5081 "An Act Concerning Phosphorous Reduction Reimbursements To Municipalities"

CCM supports **HB 5081**.

HB 5081 would provide needed financial assistance to municipalities in complying with mandated phosphorus reduction limits in order to achieve statewide environmental goals by offering eligibility for financial reimbursement for additional projects to reduce phosphorus.

Currently, municipalities are working with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to implement a "Phosphorus Reduction Strategy for Inland Non-Tidal Waters"; this strategy will impact towns and cities across Connecticut. Implementing this strategy will require significant upgrades and financial investments to municipal wastewater treatment plants in order to achieve the mandated reductions of phosphorous limits in wastewater discharge. Some these cost estimates are in the tens of millions of dollars; **Danbury \$25 million; Wallingford \$19 million; Southington \$18 million; Meriden \$13.5 million; and Cheshire \$7.2 million.**

In 2013, the General Assembly provided towns with a measure of relief with the passage of PA 13-239 which increased, from 30% to 50%, the amount municipalities are eligible to receive under the Clean Water Fund grant program. Unfortunately, the relief offered by the increased reimbursements was made available only to the first three construction contracts entered into by municipalities before July 1, 2018. This language would preclude assistance to municipalities that may not yet be ready to enter into contracts by the 2018 deadline.

HB 5081 addresses this concern and expands the number of projects that would be eligible for reimbursement. This bill would provide needed financial assistance to these municipalities in achieving EPA/DEEP's standards without unfairly burdening residents in the affected municipalities.

CCM asks the **committee to support HB 5081.**



If you have any questions, please contact Randy Collins, Senior Legislative Associate for CCM, at rcollins@ccm-ct.org or (860) 707-6446.