



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE MARY M. MUSHINSKY
EIGHTY-FIFTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 4038
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591
HOME: (203) 269-8378
CAPITOL: (860) 240-8500
TOLL FREE: 1-800-842-8267
E-mail: Mary.Mushinsky@cga.ct.gov

CO-CHAIR
PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE

MEMBER
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
FINANCE REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE

**Testimony of Rep. Mary Mushinsky (85th) in Support of R.B. 5424, An Act
Concerning the Responsibilities of the Water Planning Council**

Before the Environment Committee
Friday, March 7, 2014

1:00 p.m. in Room 1D

I support this latest effort to create a statewide water plan, inspired by Rep. John Hampton's work to bring together a water summit in October 2013. The Farmington River in Rep. Hampton's district experienced a threatened diversion as UConn sought water for its expansion. That incident is only the latest example of conflict over water use, aggravated by the lack of a statewide water plan. Previous efforts included SB 383 in 2010 and HB 5518 in 2011.

The statutes (Sec. 22a-352, formerly Sec. 25-5b) actually mandated creation of a statewide water plan in 1967. Three agencies—Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), Dept. of Public Health (DPH) and Office of Policy and Management (OPM)—were to prepare and adopt the plan, then submit it to the legislature for approval. A water planning council including the three agencies has been working on the issue since 2001. Thirteen years later the plan still does not exist.

What is the cause of the delay? Primarily, CT does not have a statewide water plan because there are no planning staff at the agencies. The plan is a data-synthesis exercise followed by allocation policy. OPM does not have environmental planners for this project. We have DEEP natural resources data and DPH public water supply data but not a common water document. The state has plentiful annual rainfall but suffers regional shortages and conflicts, particularly in late summer. Conflicts will increase as the state faces the challenges of streamflow protection and climate change. Intelligent planning,

conservation and allocation among competing needs in a statewide plan will give CT sustainable water resources and make the state attractive to residents and businesses.

The bill includes recommendations from a series of meetings among stakeholders since October 2013. Gov. Malloy endorsed a statewide water plan at the recent UConn water conference. While there are still disagreements to be ironed out, particularly the location of planning staff (OPM vs. DEEP), whether safe yield water supply information should be subject to Freedom of Information disclosure, and how to complete the WUCC (Water Utility Coordinating Committee) water supply territories while respecting environmental protection of streams, the basic bill is critical to move forward. I thank the committee leadership for raising this bill and am happy to work with Rep. Hampton and others to improve the legislation.