



Connecticut Department of  
**ENERGY &  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION**

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

Public Hearing – March 7, 2014  
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Interim Commissioner Robert J. Klee  
Presented By Deputy Commissioner McCleary

**House Bill No. 5420 (Raised) – AAC FUNDS FOR WATER SUPPLIES IN CONTAMINATED AREAS.**

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding House Bill No. 5420 – AAC FUNDS FOR WATER SUPPLIES IN CONTAMINATED AREAS. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) welcomes the opportunity to offer the following testimony.

DEEP has serious concerns about the proposal and offers the following testimony.

As background, general statute section 22a-471 currently covers grants from the state to municipalities to provide potable water necessary to address polluted drinking water. The bill would amend general statute section 22a-471 to add a requirement that, in situations where DEEP orders a municipality to provide long-term potable water to address polluted drinking water, the state also provide grants to a municipality to cover 100% of the costs of supplying water for economic development, firefighting and other public health needs.

First, DEEP has concerns that the fiscal impact to the state will be significant, by adding 100% coverage by the state of the costs associated with economic development, firefighting and other public health needs unrelated to providing potable water. The potable water funds are limited so should stay focused on pollution from commercial/industrial sources. General statute section 22a-471 is designed to result in an equitable share of the costs in relation to the amount of water to be provided when extending water mains.

Second, if the grants for potable water were tied up with grants for economic development and other issues, it would likely slow down the decision making process, slow down the provision of grants, and thus delay the resolution of the public health problem of polluted drinking water.

Third, while the legislature may provide grants to municipalities for matters it deems appropriate, such as economic development, those decisions should be made as economic development decisions, and not comingled with resolving potable water issues.

Fourth, the statute currently addresses grants to municipalities for addressing the potable water problem. Thus, it is very unclear what is meant in the bill by the other public health needs, but it may be addressing naturally occurring substances. Given the state's geology and the low levels of naturally occurring substances in groundwater across the state, the reach of this provision may be incredibly broad and cost prohibitive. We have other concerns as well, but those identified above are the primary issues.

We encourage the legislature to evaluate individual funding mechanisms for special situations, and for economic development and fire protection, through a grant mechanism separate from the carefully constructed potable water purpose of general statute section 22a-471.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact Robert LaFrance, DEEP's Director of Governmental Affairs, at 860.424.3401 or [Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov](mailto:Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov) (or, Elizabeth McAuliffe, DEEP Legislative Liaison, at 860.424.3458 or [Elizabeth.McAuliffe@ct.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.McAuliffe@ct.gov) ).