



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 Macky McCleary

**Senate Bill No. 306 (Raised) – AAC ALLOCATING FUNDING FOR THE PROVISION OF POTABLE WATER TO CERTAIN COMMUNITIES AND REAUTHORIZING THE COMMISSIONER OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION TO PROVIDE POTABLE WATER TO COMMUNITIES UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.**

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Raised Senate Bill No. 306 – AAC ALLOCATING FUNDING FOR THE PROVISION OF POTABLE WATER TO CERTAIN COMMUNITIES AND REAUTHORIZING THE COMMISSIONER OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION TO PROVIDE POTABLE WATER TO COMMUNITIES UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) welcomes the opportunity to offer the following testimony.

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

In 2013, section 22a-471 of the general statutes was amended to remove DEEP's authority to provide short-term potable water "to residences and schools where the groundwater is polluted and represents an unreasonable risk of injury." The law retained DEEP's authority to investigate potential sources of pollution, parties responsible for the pollution, and to work with municipalities to provide long-term potable water solutions.

Section 2 of Raised Senate Bill 306 amends section 22a-471 of the general statutes by resurrecting the requirement that DEEP provide a short-term supply of potable water "to residences and schools where the groundwater is polluted and represents an unreasonable risk of injury."

The ability to provide short-term potable water has evolved over time and is now at the point where it can be accomplished by property owners through the installation and maintenance of commercially available water filtration systems. These products and services are available from private sector businesses in Connecticut and are similar to plumbing services. The maintenance costs of such systems are, on average, about the same as what residents who have public water pay for their water bills. Also, in some situations, the use of bottled water is an appropriate short-term approach. Obtaining bottled

water, either at supermarkets or by arranging for home delivery, is a common practice by property owners whether or not a well is polluted.

DEEP is not well situated to provide short-term potable water services as these services--similar to plumbing services--may require weekend and evening service calls. Our experience is that private sector businesses are competent and capable of providing well water filtration services.

With the 2013 amendments to the Potable Water program, DEEP now sees its role as providing education to property owners and local health directors on how to address short-term potable water supply, investigating potential sources of pollution, parties responsible for the pollution, prosecuting enforcement actions as appropriate, and continuing to assist municipalities on providing long-term potable water such as through the extension of water main should that approach be cost effective. Under current law, we will continue to work with local officials to provide long-term potable water solutions to contaminated water problems.

DEEP takes no position on section 1 of the bill that seeks a bond authorization for the city of Torrington.

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) ).