



Connecticut Chapter
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Martin Mador, Legislative Chair

Public Health Committee
March 17, 2014

Testimony In Opposition to
HB 5543 AAC Water Quality

I am Martin Mador, 130 Highland Ave., Hamden, CT 06518. I am the volunteer Legislative Chair for the Connecticut Chapter of the Sierra Club. I hold a Masters of Environmental Management degree from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

Connecticut has a strong program in place to protect drinking water quality by protecting lands which protect these waters.

HB 5543 would remove oversight of the Department of Public Health over water company changes of use of water company land. We feel this oversight should remain.

We are also concerned about transfer of authority to professionals who are hired by, accountable to, and paid by, companies whose interests they represent. The language in Section 2 of the bill authorizing these professionals to certify applications is not in the public interest.

The advocacy community, including the Sierra Club, has ongoing communication with water company leaders and personnel. We value and appreciate the open dialogue we have had, and frequently find that we take the same position on issues. We acknowledge the stewardship the water companies in the state have shown for our natural resources.

Nevertheless, we find we must oppose HB 5543, as written. Perhaps the bill should be revised to retain DPH oversight and approval for significant changes, while requiring only reporting for changes of minimal consequence.