



To The Chairmen of the Public Health Committee:

**Sen. Terry Gerratana and Rep. Susan Johnson**

And to the Honorable Members of the Committee

**RE: HB 5543 AAC Water Quality**

Date: March 17, 2014, Public Hearing

*Rivers Alliance of Connecticut is the statewide, non-profit coalition of river organizations, individuals, and businesses formed to protect and enhance Connecticut's waters by promoting sound water policies, uniting and strengthening the state's many river groups, and educating the public about the importance of water stewardship.*

**Rivers Alliance writes to oppose 5543 as written.** While it is our understanding that the purpose is to expedite approval of minor, routine tasks, the language appears to exempt a wide range of activities from oversight by the Department of Public Health. At the same time, the municipal and regional water companies have a broad exemption from wetlands law; the private companies are required to consult and work with wetlands commissions. So it is not clear who would be overseeing what, given the language in the bill. We believe that discussion is needed to see if there is common ground

Section 2 would establish a program somewhat similar to the program for Licensed Environmental Professionals. However, conversations in connection with the state's efforts to transform its remediation rules have revealed several flaws in the LEP program. The most prominent, often mentioned by LEPs themselves, is the inherent conflict of interest in having the party under review by the professional be the paymaster on whom the professional depends. Again, we would be willing to discuss this further.

Thank you for your care to protect our drinking water.

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A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margaret Miner".

Margaret Miner

Executive Director

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