

Testimony
William W. Dickinson, Jr.
Mayor, Town of Wallingford
Before the
Environment Committee
February 19, 2014

RE: HB-5081, An Act Concerning Phosphorus Reduction Reimbursements to Municipalities

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in *support of the intent of HB-5081, to increase the reimbursement rate for municipal phosphorus reduction projects to 50%*.

The Town of Wallingford and a number of other municipalities are currently faced with enormous compliance burdens associated with DEEP's proposed permit requirements relative to phosphorous discharge limits. According to DEEP's data, some 45 entities in Connecticut will be affected by the new discharge standards.

For Wallingford, Cheshire, Southington and Meriden, the four towns along the Quinnipiac River, compliance with the proposed permit limits would require a total capital investment of approximately \$58 million, a total increase in plant operating costs of \$1.9 million per year and resultant rate increases that would range from 23% to 40% by town. For Wallingford alone the initial capital cost would be \$19 million with a resulting 32% rate increase.

The Town of Wallingford requests that the reimbursement rate be **increased to fund 90%** of the cost of plant improvements made necessary by standards that mandate the removal of phosphorus from plant discharges. Sanitary sewer plant construction projects received 90% federal and state funding through the 1990s. High priority was placed on the protection of public health and the environment. Since phosphorus removal is also being given a high priority, it is equally appropriate that municipalities receive the same level of financial support in these very difficult times.