

Senator Kennedy, Representative Albis, and Members of the Environment Committee,
On behalf of the Farmington River Watershed Association, I'm writing to oppose HB 5709. The bill unnecessarily circumvents a process that is already in progress to address the same problem that the bill does. The CT DEEP's proposed MS4 stormwater permitting regulations have been shown to be impractical for many small towns to comply with. Consequently the proposed regulations are being reviewed, with intent to revise them so that they don't impose unrealistic requirements where they are not needed in small towns. The bill, by contrast, would simply exempt small towns from stormwater permitting, a solution that replaces overly broad-brush requirements with equally broad-brush exemption. The exemption as proposed by HB 5709 could allow towns to neglect stormwater management, even when they can and should take measures to reduce pollution caused by stormwater runoff. Nutrient pollution in our waterways is a serious hazard to our natural resources and our public health. In attempting to reduce a regulatory burden, this legislation could allow neglect of real runoff problems that can exist on a small community scale. Instead of legislating, let review and revision of the regulations run its course, so as to find a workable fit between needed permitting requirements and the realities of small-town stormwater management.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eileen Fielding". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Eileen Fielding
Executive Director
Farmington River Watershed Association
749 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT 06070