



CCM 2015 Testimony

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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

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The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent 156 towns and cities and over 96% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

HB 5291 "An Act Concerning Reimbursement for Municipal Phosphorus Reduction Projects"

CCM supports HB 5291, which would assist municipalities in meeting state and federal phosphorus reduction goals.

Connecticut's towns and cities continue to lead the way, shouldering the financial burden of providing for a clean and safe environment and protecting our natural resources.

HB 5291 would provide some measure of financial relief for towns struggling to comply with state and federal phosphorus reduction goals. Towns and cities such as Wallingford, Cheshire, and Waterbury, to site a few, are currently faced with enormous compliance burdens associated with DEEP's proposed permit requirements relative to phosphorous discharge limits.

The cost of compliance for these municipalities is in the millions of dollars. The initial capital costs required to provide needed plant upgrades to meet the state requirement would be \$19 million for Wallingford, \$50 million for Waterbury, \$18.5 million for Southington, \$13.5 million for Meriden, \$25 million for Danbury and \$7 million for Cheshire. Further, millions would be required annually for increased operating costs.

HB 5291 would expand the eligibility of financial assistance to communities that DEEP has deemed ineligible for the 50% reimbursement adopted last session because of requirements for construction contracts to be entered into by July 1, 2018 and requirements to meet a .2 mg/l effluent discharge limit.

Additionally, HB 5291 would strengthen the collaborative process established by PA 12-155 in which stakeholders and DEEP have worked towards the development of a statewide phosphorus reduction plan to reduce non-point source pollution in order to alleviate pressure on municipal water pollution control authorities, utilize a science-based approach for addressing nutrient issues and explore cost-effective means to assist municipalities meet EPA compliance standards.

Passage of HB 5291 will not only benefit municipalities currently undertaking phosphorus reduction projects but will benefit the entire state through improved water quality. Statewide environmental goals are a benefit to all and should not be carried by a few select towns and cities.

CCM urges the Committee to support for HB 5291.



If you have any questions, please contact Randy Collins, Senior Legislative Associate, at rcollins@ccm-ct.org or (203) 498-3000