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Testimony of State Representative Paul Brycki in Support of:

**HB 5693 AN ACT REQUIRING NOTICE AND CONTINGENCY PLANS PRIOR TO THE STATE DRAW
DOWN OF LAKES AND PONDS**

Environment Committee Public Hearing
Friday, February 27th, 12pm
Room 1D

Chairman Albis, Chairman Kennedy, Members of the Environment Committee, for the record my name is Paul Brycki, State Representative for the 45th District and I am here to testify in support of HB 5693 AN ACT REQUIRING NOTICE AND CONTINGENCY PLANS PRIOR TO THE STATE DRAW DOWN OF LAKES AND PONDS.

I would like to thank the committee for raising this bill and the opportunity to testify here today. Just to give a bit of history, the area of the state I represent in Griswold and Voluntown has two large rivers which flow through it, the Pachaug River and the Quinebaug River. This is where some of the early Native Americans settled, and future settlers from Norwich, Stonington and Preston moved to take up residence much in large part to the close proximity to these bodies of water. This area also includes many ponds including Hopeville, Pachaug, Beach Pond, Beach Dale and Glasgo. Many man made dams were also formed to harness hydroelectricity to power many of the manufacturing plants that were built. Many of these ponds and dams were then eventually taken over by the State in order to protect them.

Given the large amount of these ponds and lakes owned by the State through the DEEP, I had introduced this proposed legislation in response to an issue that affected many of my constituents in both Griswold and Voluntown who reside on Glasgo Pond. The issue occurred when the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection needed to draw down the pond in order to make inspections for design work for repairs to a 146-year-old dam. The initial draw down of September 1, 2014, was five feet, but of bigger concern was a much larger drawn down originally set to occur this February 2015 and be completed in May of 2016. That draw down has since been delayed to give residents more time to make preparations.

Even just the drawdown of five feet caused for many resident's wells to run dry. Although the DEEP held a local meeting two weeks in advance of the drawdown many residents felt this did not give them much time to adequately prepare for the potential of being without water. As you can also see from the written testimony submitted by Bob Sirpenski, the First Selectman of Voluntown, the town was given no notice at all.

This bill would simply require that in the future DEEP give advance notice of at least 30 days to residents whenever they need to conduct any drawdown. This would also include notice for just regular routine drawdowns that are done so that homeowners can conduct maintenance on their property. I also believe it would be good idea that when the draw down is of a substantial enough amount, that DEEP even hold a local informational hearing to address the concerns of residents. I would also add that the importance of having advance notice of these draw downs, not only concerns wells and property maintenance, but these ponds also host many activities that bring people our area such as fishing tournaments and canoe races. Having more information and advance notice about the timing of these drawdowns will help in being able to prepare for these types of events.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify and I look forward to working with the Committee in further developing this legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul J. Brycki". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and "B".

Paul Brycki
State Representative