



**Testimony  
Elizabeth Gara  
Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA)  
Before the Environment Committee  
Public Hearing  
February 5, 2015**

**CWWA supports SB-347, AN ACT CONCERNING THE PERCENTAGE OF STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDS THAT MAY BE USED TO PURCHASE OPEN SPACE UNDER THE OPEN SPACE AND WATERSHED LAND ACQUISITION PROGRAM.**

CWWA has long supported efforts to protect Connecticut's water supply watershed and aquifer lands by preserving these lands as open space. Connecticut has made tremendous progress in protecting the state's open space lands due to programs like the Open Space and Watershed Acquisition program and the tax credit program for the donation of open space land at discount prices.

These programs provide powerful incentives to conservation groups, municipalities and water utilities to acquire and preserve open space lands to help protect Connecticut's ecological habitats, its natural beauty and its outdoor recreational areas.

SB-347 enhances these efforts by removing the 70% cap on the use of state and federal funds for the purchase of open space lands, including those within water supply watersheds and aquifers. This will be very significant for long-term source water protection, which is vital to preserving the state's water resources for future generations.

CWWA urges your **support for SB-347**.

*The Connecticut Water Works Association, Inc. (CWWA) is an association of private, regional and municipal water supply utilities serving more than 500,000 customers, or population of about 2½ million people, located throughout Connecticut. As purveyors of public water supplies, our members have an obligation to provide sufficient quantities of high-quality water at a reasonable cost to consumers of the communities served.*