



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Energy & Technology Committee

February 10, 2015

Commissioner Jewel Mullen, MD, MPH, MPA

860-509-7101

Senate Bill # 569 - An Act Concerning Community Water Systems

The Department of Public Health (DPH) would like to thank the Energy & Technology Committee for raising this bill and provides the following information:

SB 569 requires the Department of Public Health and the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority to establish a process to identify and oversee small community water systems having financial difficulties that are not part of a water supply plan, and mandates the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority to establish a cost-based, rate-setting policy for small community water systems established in the future. DPH currently regulates 332 small community water systems that are not part of a water supply plan. DPH oversees the water quality and quantity of small community public water systems. This oversight includes a field survey conducted every three years by DPH staff engineers. The survey is a review of compliance with regulatory requirements. Many times as part of the survey, system condition is noted with repairs suggested, however if the repair is not specifically associated with a violation the system owner may not conduct the repair. DPH believes that additional regulatory oversight and enforcement ability is needed in order to assure system owners are conducting necessary system repairs.

Further, additional guidance and training is needed for system owners concerning financial capacity and responsibility of ownership of a public water system. DPH is presently offering no-cost asset management and financial plan development training, subsidized EPA Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) loans for small system for the purchase of system generators. DPH also assisted in the development of PA 14-98 (Section 46) to offer additional financial assistance through the DWSRF loan process with up to a 50% subsidy for eligible small systems.

While DPH agrees with this proposal and its beneficial outcomes, additional resources will be needed by DPH to carry out and implement this initiative. Consequently, due to the additional resources that would be needed to implement the requirements associated with this bill, the Department is not supportive of the bill at this time. However, the Department would be happy to discuss the proposal further with the bill's proponents.

Thank you for your consideration of the DPH's views on this bill.

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