

March 9, 2016

ATTN: MEMBERS OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

RE: S.B. #422 - AN ACT CONCERNING RESIDENTIAL WATER RATES, PUBLIC DRINKING WATER SUPPLY EMERGENCIES AND SELLERS OF BOTTLED WATER.

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Osten and Representative Miller and members of the Planning & Development Committee.

I thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of SB #422. This Bill addresses the heart of a rising problem and the heat recently generated over a town agreement which outraged a large number of citizens from Bloomfield and other towns over the disparity in rate charges and drought level restrictions.

What will it take to understand that water can not be lightly-perceived as a commodity to be bartered and sold to the highest bidder. It belongs to all of us as a life-sustaining resource that must be protected and conserved. Moreover, I believe Bill #422 speaks to the demand for establishing equitable practices and policies. It also sets clear parameters for water suppliers. By addressing recycling and conservation, Bill #422 tackles the growing exigencies of waste discharge impacting our waterways and health.

We shouldn't wait for a Flint, Michigan, California shortage, or a Vegas, Texas<sup>1</sup> to wake up.

This excerpt from a News report: should be enough of a wake up call. *"The once bounteous quantities of water that flowed under his farmland in the Texas Panhandle are a distant memory-pumped to the last drop. Now there is only one source of water for his wheat and sorghum: the sky above...The scope of this mounting crisis is difficult to overstate: The High Plains of Texas are swiftly running out of ground-water supplied by one of the world's largest aquifers- the Ogallala. A study by Texas Tech University has predicted that if groundwater production goes unabated, vast portions of several counties in the southern High Plains will soon have little water left in the aquifer to be of any practical value."*<sup>1</sup>

Statements have been made that we in Connecticut have an abundance of water and need to use it. In my view, the following EPA's expert assessment should be regarded: *Water quality could suffer in areas experiencing increases in rainfall. For example, in the Northeast and Midwest increases in heavy precipitation events could cause problems for the water infrastructure, as sewer systems and water treatment plants are overwhelmed by the increased volumes of water. Heavy downpours can increase the amount of runoff into rivers and lakes, washing sediment, nutrients, pollutants, trash, animal waste, and other materials into water supplies, making them unusable, unsafe, or in need of water treatment."*<sup>2</sup>

I commend Senator Bye and Representative Baram for responding to citizens' appeals and concerns and ask that you approve Bill #422.

Cordially,

Ann Beaudin

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REFERENCES:

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/last-drop-americas-breadbasket-faces-dire-water-crisis-July-14,2014> News article; THE LAST DROP: AMERICA'S BREADBASKET FACES DIRE WATER CRISES by Brian Brown with additional reporting by Gil Aegerter

<sup>2</sup> EPA [www3.epa.gov/climatechange/impacts/water.html#watersupply](http://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/impacts/water.html#watersupply). For information about how climate change and water quality affect public health, visit Health Impacts page.