

Re: Legislative Hearing Friday March 11th at 11 AM

Support for Substitute SB 422 - An Act Concerning Residential Water Rates, Public Drinking Water Supply Emergencies and the Sellers of Bottled Water

The production of bottled water in Connecticut needs to stop. The impact on the environment and on the residents of the towns where bottlers set up shop is too severe. The water bottling plants function 24/7, where trucks will resultantly wear down our roads, pollute our air, create traffic congestion, and make noise all hours of the day. Niagra Bottling will produce 2.6 million more plastic bottles every day for each bottling line. Not all of these bottles will be recycled and plastic in the environment is toxic. The manufacture of plastic bottles requires handling oil-based materials that need to be trucked in, properly stored, and are subject to treatment as hazardous.

20% of Niagra's daily water usage would be in the form of waste water. Niagra anticipates purchasing up to 1.8 million gallons of water per day from the MDC. This water would be exported outside the state. In these times of uncertainty, were drought has devastated parts of our country, we cannot afford to give up our water! Last time I drove by the reservoir, the water was extremely low. Should this region experience a water shortage, CT law does not allow the MDC to shut off the supply of water to Niagra.

Additionally, the few dozen jobs offered by Niagra are low-wage and the plant will be predominantly operated by robots. Is this what we want for our young people entering the work force in our state? Where in a few years we will leave this very work force with the environmental problems of pollution and water shortages.

How can a privately traded company even dream of taking a public utility? Each member of the public will suffer an increased financial burden so Niagra can operate their business, and operate at reduced rates for water and sewage to boot! They are essentially being given a discount to overuse our water and pollute our environment. We have all tried harder to conserve our water, and as reported by the MDC we have. Why is Niagra going to be given an incentive to use more?

In summary:

- Protect residents, not water bottlers during a drought.
- Rescind water rate discounts for water bottlers.
- Rescind the Special Sewer Service Charge discount for water bottlers (now known as the Clean Water Project Charge).
- Re-establish a citizen MDC (Metropolitan District Commission) watch dog committee.
- Impose a moratorium on any new large capacity agreements until the State Water Plan is completed and addresses the issue of water bottling companies diverting water out of watersheds.

Thank you for all you do,
Ann Marie Kimmett