

March 5, 2016

To: Members of the Planning & Development Committee,

Re: Public Hearing March 11, 2016 on SB 422

From: Bonnie Karkowski  
Windsor, CT

I am writing in support of SB 422 as I believe that it will aid in protecting our water supply for generations to come. Below are a few reasons why I feel this bill is the important.

1. MDC and municipalities need to provide greater transparency by including public opinion in their decisions whenever a high volume industrial use of our potable water supply is proposed. In the instance that prompted this bill (a water bottling plant), the use also involves the production and disposal of millions of plastic bottles. Both of these processes are problematic for our environment regardless of where the bottles are made and where they are discarded.

2. The MDC states that our two reservoirs currently have enough water for our needs for two years even if we do not have any precipitation during that time. Are they taking into consideration all of the new housing, particularly apartment buildings, being constructed in member towns which may become fully occupied during those two years? With more people living in member towns there are bound to be more services and businesses demanding more water. As one example, if population increases in member towns, there will be a greater need for hospital care, which may require expansion of facilities with greater demand for water. Our hospitals are already among the highest users of MDC water. The needs of our hospitals are certainly more essential to our communities than a water bottling plant.

3. With the effects of climate change, precipitation may become a very erratic event, too unreliable to predict from year to year. We may go for many years with half of "normal" precipitation; or we may be deluged at times followed by long periods of drought. Floods can be as devastating to a water supply as drought.

4. In these times, there is always the possibility of either environmental contamination or of a terrorist attack that might compromise one of our reservoirs thereby drastically reducing our supply. We would then need every drop of water in the other reservoir to satisfy our needs. It is simply too risky to allow the exportation of large volumes of our water.

5. Many residents, like myself, have taken measures to reduce our consumption of water at the urging of the MDC and our pocketbooks. The MDC claims that in the past 10 yrs residential water bills have increased an average of \$10. Then why has mine gone from \$40 to \$45/quarter to \$65 to \$70/quarter in that time even though my usage has gone down and I do not have city sewers?

6. The MDC claims that Niagara Bottling Company's use of MDC water will lower residential bills. If that is true with Niagara paying a discounted rate, then, obviously, if they paid the same rate as residential users, we would save even more. With the discount, they are going to be making a greater profit on our water, while we, in effect, subsidize them.

Please approve SB 422. Thank you.