

March 8, 2016

Chris Corcoran
96 North Quaker Lane
West Hartford CT 06119

Planning and Development Committee Testimony

Hearing March 11, 11am

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

Senator Osten, Representative Miller and other distinguished committee members, I want to thank you for this opportunity to address Substitute SB-422.

I am deeply concerned about the proposed Niagara Bottling Plant in Bloomfield. At a time when Connecticut residents are doing more and more to conserve water, it flies in the face of reason to allow a massive bottling operation to open for business. Besides re-bottling our public water for profit, this plant will generate thousands of gallons of wastewater.

Niagara's track record with regards to secrecy in the permit process and adhering to agreements it makes with municipalities is flawed at best, and I am asking Planning and Development Committee to help ensure our precious resource, our water, is protected.

Here are five steps I am asking you to take to ensure our water is protected from Niagara Bottling or other bottling companies who try and co-opt our public water supply:

- **Force water bottlers to abide by the same regulations for reduced consumption as citizens.** Corporations should receive no special treatment when it comes to conservation, especially in a time of drought. Ensure they cut back at the same level as citizens are required.
- **Rescind water rate discounts for water bottlers.** These corporations are fully capable of paying full market rate for our water.
- **Rescind the *Special Sewer Service Charge* discount for water bottlers (now known as the *Clean Water Project Charge*).** CT ratepayers have paid for years to build infrastructure for clean water; these corporations can afford to pay into the system.
- **Re-establish a citizen MDC (Metropolitan District Commission) watch dog committee.** Many aspects of the approval for this project were done in secret and without proper public input. The MDC is too big an organization to not have oversight from the citizens they are meant to serve.
- **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 your attention to this important issue and for taking the steps to our precious resource, our public water.