

March 10, 2016

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

Hearing date: Friday, March 11, 2016

Co-Chair Senator Osten and Co-Chair Representative Miller, Vice Chairs, Ranking Members and Members of the Planning and Development Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in regards to the proposed Niagara Bottling Plant in Bloomfield. Water is a PUBLIC natural resource and should be treated as such. Metropolitan District Commission shouldn't be making a business deal with a PRIVATE bottling company without public knowledge and proper regulations. The water from the Farmington River, Watershed & Barkhamsted and Nepaug Reservoirs should be used conservatively in-case of a drought. Connecticut citizens' water should be protected against corporate greed. Preservation of the natural environment and wild life could be potentially at risk and measures should be taken seriously.

Why is MDC is not charging fair rates across the board. Instead MDC is charging residents (normal users) high water and sewer service rates while giving a PRIVATE bottling company (large users) discounted water and sewer service rates. A moratorium should be set up until the state confirms the best solution in protecting Connecticut citizens.

Please consider the following steps in support of the bill:

- **Protect residents, not water bottlers during a drought.** If the DPH declares a Drought Advisory, the production of bottled water for export out of state needs to stop.
- **Rescind water rate discounts for water bottlers.** They extract large amounts of our municipal water and spring water, fill the environment with plastic pollution, and profit while citizens are conserving and paying more.
- **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; no discounts for corporations.
- **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.

I urge you to do the right thing and SUPPORT Senator's Bye's Substitute SB 422.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Sarwar
4 Stanford Hill Road
Essex, CT 06426