

March 10, 2016

Members of the Planning and Development Committee  
Connecticut General Assembly  
State Capitol  
Hartford, CT 06106

To the Members of the Planning and Development Committee:

I am writing to convey testimony in support of Connecticut SB422, hearing scheduled for March 11, 2016.

I was dismayed to find out so late in the process that an agreement between Niagara and Bloomfield, CT was virtually done, with NO input from other towns directly affected by the introduction of a water bottling company. I was very surprised to learn that residents in towns including MDC/reservoir lands have little to no say in agreements the MDC makes.

SB422 attempts to correct the imbalance that favors whatever the MDC is (private company, steward of natural resource—contradictory purposes?) over the concerns of citizens dependent on the service. We don't have much choice when turning on our taps, so we need legislation that will protect our access to water, how lands around our water are treated, and fair costs and fees.

The bottling co and MDC will say that Niagara will bring 38 jobs to Bloomfield and \$1.2 million to Bloomfield's tax base. The jobs are obviously not great in number and the tax amount is not that large, especially given the impact of the bottling plant on the many surrounding towns that will not also receive the tax income. Bloomfield proposed giving Niagara a tax abatement of \$4.1 million to attract the business.

Please pass SB422, sensible and fair legislation needed for protection of natural resources and populations.

Sincerely,

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cc: Co-chairs of the Planning and Development Committee Sen. Cathy Osten and Rep. Philip Miller;  
State Senator Beth Bye, State Representative Joe Verrengia, US Senator Christopher Murphy, US Senator Richard Blumenthal, and US Representative John B. Larson