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Testimony submitted to the Planning & Development Committee
for the public hearing on March 11, 2016

In support of **Proposed Substitute Bill No. 422 LCO No. 2975:**
An Act Concerning Residential Water Rates,
Public Drinking Water Supply Emergencies and Sellers of Bottled Water.

Members of the Planning and Development Committee,

I support **Proposed Substitute Bill No. 422 LCO No. 2975.**

Our public water is a precious resource and must be treated as such. It should not be bottled and sold, nor should it be shipped out-of-state. Sadly, that may soon happen. To make matters worse, right now there are policies that the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) and others have enacted that severely threaten the future security of Connecticut's public water system.

This bill can help stop the erosion of our water supply by prioritizing the sale of water to residential customers during a public drinking water supply emergency. Connecticut residents have paid and continue to pay for the water infrastructure, and we need to protect and prioritize our right to our own local resource. Keep our water in our state and prohibit water export out-of-state during water emergencies. While there may be a sufficient water supply today, this section of the bill is critical in allocating water during a drought or other water emergency.

Water bottling companies should not be allowed to bottle Connecticut's public water supply, transfer it out of state, and sell it for private profit. Unfortunately, that is exactly what is being planned in Bloomfield. The MDC has offered a private water bottling company discounted rates. There should be no discounts on water rates for water bottling operations. All users should pay the same, full residential rates household consumers pay. Ordinary citizens are told by water companies to conserve, yet the commercial discounts incentivize large-scale users to consume more.

Similarly, water bottling companies must not receive a reduction in the sewer rate, and must be charged the same rate residential customers pay. In the MDC-district towns, residential customers pay premium sewer charges we approved in a referendum to fund the Clean Water project. Residents' rates must not skyrocket while water bottling companies receive a special deal. The MDC has offered a special discount that will benefit a private water bottling company. Sewer rate rules must prohibit discounts for water bottling operations.

I urge you to support Proposed Substitute Bill No. 422 LCO No. 2975.

Thank you for your consideration.