

Subject: Protect Our Drinking Water

I write in support of SB 422, a bill which will protect the clean drinking water that we all depend on here in Connecticut. I am very concerned about the recent attempt to sell large quantities of water from the MDC reservoir to Niagara Bottling Company.

I object to the use of our water in a way that adds to the destruction of our environment. I am shocked at the lack of transparency by MDC and the Town of Bloomfield in the process of making a deal to sell water to Niagara.

This plan would address these issues on a statewide level, in order to prevent such travesties from occurring again. The plan would:

1. Re-establish a citizen MDC (Metropolitan District Commission) watchdog committee to ensure that the MDC works openly with its citizen members to make the wisest decisions involving our water resources.
2. Rescind the special discounts on water rates and special sewer service charges enacted by the MDC for large volume users (Niagara Bottling). Discounts for large volume users incentivize overuse, not conservation of a precious and limited public resource.
3. Prioritize state residents in a drought and prohibit the export of water out of state in any Drought Emergency. Residents will be cutting water use while water bottling companies will be shipping it out-of-state. The DPH will step in only when our reservoirs are down to 10% capacity. Revise our state drought plan to protect residents.
4. Complete the State Water Plan before allowing any further large water sales. Prohibit any new water capacity agreements of over 250,000 gallons/day until a state water plan is in place. Require a water diversion permit for out-of-watershed transfers by trucks.
5. Enact a 1 cent per bottle tax on all bottled water to fund water infrastructure repair and the increased costs of recycling and pollution associated with bottled water. Billions of new single-use water bottles in CT spell environmental disaster for our landfills and waters.

MDC-served towns include: Bloomfield, Hartford, Windsor, East Hartford, Newington, Rocky Hill, West Hartford, and Windsor as well as sections of Farmington, Glastonbury, East Granby, and South Windsor. But this plan will benefit everyone in Connecticut!

Please make passing SB 422 a priority this session. It is urgent that we protect our water!

Thank you and I look forward to your response.

Linda Rigono