

March 10, 2016

LouAnne McDonald
146 Giddings Avenue
Windsor, CT 06095

Support for Substitute SB 422

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

Hearing Date: March 11, 2016

**To the Hon. Cathy Osten, Co-Chair, the Hon. Philip Miller, Co-Chair, and the
Honorable Members of the Planning and Development Committee:**

I have lived in Connecticut for 39 years, and this is my first time sending testimony to the legislature.

I am concerned about the management of our water supply. Every year in its annual water report, the MDC tells us, on page 3, that “Water is a limited resource, so it is vital that we all work together to maintain it and use it wisely.” Yet, we have recently learned that the MDC quietly granted Niagara Bottling a significant discount and incentives to open a plant in Bloomfield, to bottle and sell up to 1.8 million gallons of water per day from our public water supply. The public also learned, after the fact, that the Bloomfield Town Council voted to give Niagara a big tax abatement at its December 14 meeting.

I watched the video of that December 14 Bloomfield Town Council meeting and heard MDC CEO Scott Jellison say that “The MDC and the town of Bloomfield jumped through hoops to try and accommodate and attract Niagara.” He talked about the year-and-a-half long process that the MDC, Niagara and Bloomfield took part in. He celebrated the fact that citizens in Kingston NY rejected Niagara’s plan to open a plant there, as that allowed Niagara to come here.

This should not have happened. The MDC and the town of Bloomfield spent over a year and a half courting Niagara, offering incentives behind the scenes, without public knowledge or input. They made very questionable decisions, favoring an out-of-state corporation over us, the local citizens. In a time of climate change, resource depletion, and heightened concerns about public water resources, they were focused on gaining new revenue, without considering all the costs and long term impact. This has been documented by Bloomfield Citizens and CT Clean Water Action.

It is not appropriate for an outside company to extract our water for their profit. State action is needed to protect Connecticut's drinking water. I ask you to:

- Rescind water rate discounts for water bottlers.
- Rescind the Special Sewer Service ("Clean Water Project) charge discount for water bottlers.
- Impose a moratorium on any new large capacity agreements until the State Water Plan is completed.
- Protect residents, not water bottlers, during a drought.
- Establish a citizen MDC committee to ensure that MDC works openly with the public, and makes wise decisions involving the public water supply.

I urge you to support **Substitute Bill SB 422**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "LouAnne McDonald".

LouAnne McDonald
Windsor, CT
860-688-4435