

Friday March 11, 2016

Support for Substitute SB 422

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

Tim Courtney
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Dear Planning and Development Committee,

As a concerned resident of Hartford I am writing the legislature urging you to adopt Senator Beth Bye's "Substitute" Water Bill SB422, protect residents' water rights over private corporations, revoke discounted water rates to bottlers, and re-establish citizen oversight of the MDC. I oppose the deal between the MDC and Niagra Bottling which was executed by appointed (not elected) management and without opportunity for public comment.

Access to clean drinking water and sanitation are recognized by the United Nations General Assembly as a basic human right [1]. Our public agencies including the MDC must respect this and prioritize local residents' access to water before any private, for-profit interest. To do otherwise undermines the public trust and threatens the water security of future generations.

I ask you support Substitute Water Bill SB422 that includes these conditions:

- Protect residents, not water bottlers, during a drought. If the Department of Public Health declares a Drought Advisory, production of bottled water out of state should stop.
- Rescind water rate discounts for water bottlers. Bottlers 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, so we shall not offer discounts for corporations who have not shared this burden.
- Re-establish a citizen MDC (Metropolitan District Commission) watch dog committee.
- Impose a moratorium on any new large water capacity agreements until the State Water Plan is completed and addresses this issue.

Please fulfill your duty to represent Connecticut residents, not out-of-state corporations, and ensure the security of our natural resources.

Sincerely,

Tim Courtney

[1] http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/human_right_to_water.shtml