

**Testimony regarding: SB 300 AN ACT CONCERNING NEW BRITAIN WATER COMPANY LAND
Public Health Committee Public Hearing, March 7, 2016**

Dear Co-Chairs Gerratana and Ritter and esteemed members of the Public Health Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition of raised bill SB 300.

I am lifelong resident of New Britain and remember when city leaders made the decision to tear down many buildings on Main Street to make way for redevelopment and the decision to have Route 9 cut through Main Street. These are decisions that city leaders are still struggling to remedy some 40 years later and they are decisions that the taxpayers are still paying for.

This proposal between the City of New Britain and Tilcon Connecticut Inc. has many similarities to these previous decisions. These similarities pale, however, in comparison to the potential threat to human health and to the watershed environment that SB 300 presents.

The city leaders are making a decision to enter into a lease agreement that spans 40 years. This is the equivalent of two human generations. The risk of introducing contaminants from the mining operation over the 40-year mining lease into the new reservoir and into the Shuttle Meadow Reservoir is a very serious threat. It is a threat to human health, the watershed environment and to the greater Mattasbasset watershed towns.

In addition, if approved, this lease agreement will destroy 131 acres of watershed property in exchange for 94 acres of open space. I am an advocate for open space, but I do not understand how destroying 131 acres of open space in exchange for 94 acres of open space is a good thing.

I am also concerned because this agreement has Tilcon Connecticut Inc. 'giving' the City of New Britain land that will become a part of a new reservoir. From our past experience with corporate land and property transfers that were formerly factories, this land transfer has the potential of costing the taxpayers millions of dollars for the clean-up of a potential (mining) brownfield. This is a cost that New Britain residents cannot afford.

Finally, I attended the information meeting about this proposal and was told that Tilcon Connecticut Inc. would 'build us a new reservoir'. They have not, however, provided any details about who will construct and pay for the infrastructure to collect the overflow water (from the city's other reservoirs) and pump this water into Shuttle Meadow Reservoir. Again, this has the potential to be another large bill paid for by New Britain residents.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition of SB 300.

Sincerely,
Elaine Lechowicz
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