

Good afternoon Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter & distinguished members of the Public Health committee.

My name is Gary Wall, President of Tilcon Connecticut, and I am here today to respectfully urge your support for SB 300 -- An Act Concerning New Britain Water Company Land. Tilcon has been a leading supplier of quality crushed stone, hot mix asphalt, ready mix concrete and paving and construction services since 1923. The quarry at our Plainville/New Britain Headquarters is the largest of our 41 facilities in the state, where we employ almost half of our more than 600 employees in Connecticut.

At Tilcon, we pride ourselves not only on the quality of our products and work, but on being an environmentally-conscious good neighbor and a valuable economic contributor to the communities in which we operate. This legislation, which would allow us to build a reservoir for the City of New Britain, provides a number of benefits for the environment, the community and the economy, and should be considered "a win" for all parties involved.

This project would expand both watershed land and protected open space, increase the region's supply of clean drinking water, move mining and blasting operations a greater distance away from neighborhoods and retain hundreds of local jobs by extending the viable life of Tilcon's operations in Plainville and New Britain by several decades.

In exchange for purchasing the mineral rights to 131 acres of land owned by the City of New Britain within the town of Plainville, Tilcon will donate 327 acres of company-owned land as open space. This 3-to-1 exchange of open space would preserve valuable natural resources by protecting this land and preventing any future development. New Britain would receive approximately 95 acres, Plainville would receive approximately 157 acres and Southington would receive approximately 75 acres.

This proposal would enhance the region's water resources for future generations by allowing the Tilcon to develop a new reservoir for the City of New Britain. This reservoir would be large enough to hold 4.7 billion gallons of water, three times the capacity of the Shuttle Meadow Reservoir. By capturing and storing rainfall that is currently lost, enough water would be collected to increase New Britain's yield by 160,000 gallons per day and serve as many as 2,000 people year round. Creating this reservoir would transform acreage currently zoned for heavy industrial use, allowing it to be reclassified as watershed land and resulting in a net increase of 123 acres of Class I and Class II watershed property.

The project would benefit the quarry's neighbors by initiating a long term shift in mining operations away from neighborhoods in both Plainville and New Britain. This would immediately minimize the impact of blasting, as an increased 1,000 foot forested buffer would be established around the perimeter of the quarry. The project would not result in any change to the public view of the site, nor would it lead to an increase in truck traffic.

Finally, extending quarry operations in Plainville and New Britain by another 40 years would maintain one of the region's most significant source of tax revenue, sustain Tilcon's annual investment of \$40 million in wages and operating supplies and preserve hundreds of jobs. It would also allow the company to maintain our longstanding support of more than 100 local charitable organizations.

This project is a "win-win-win" -- with measurable long term benefits to the environment, the community and the economy. By providing a 3-to-1 exchange of open space and a net increase of 123 acres of Class I and Class II watershed property, it would protect and preserve valuable natural resources. It would create an expanded water supply while moving mining operations away from neighborhoods. And it would allow Tilcon to extend its operations in Plainville and New Britain for decades, maintaining a significant tax base, jobs and continued support for local charities.

Please support SB 300 and allow this project to move forward in order to benefit this region environmentally and economically for generations to come. Thank you for your consideration.