

**Linda Pagani**  
Bloomfield, CT

Testimony submitted to the Public Health Committee  
for the public hearing on March 13, 2017

In support of **Raised Bill No. 7221, LCO No. 4512:**  
An Act Concerning Access to Water Planning Information

Senators Gerratana and Somers, Representatives Steinberg and Srinivasan, and Members of the Public Health Committee,

I support **Raised Bill No. 7221, LCO No. 4512: An Act Concerning Access to Water Planning Information.**

I urge you to pass this bill so the public can have access to the data needed for water planning.

Right now, state agency representatives including those from PURA, DEEP, and DPH, as well as other water experts, are in the midst of formulating a water plan for Connecticut, as required by the legislature. At the same time, water utilities retain their right to withhold vital planning information, such as:

how much water they control;

where their water sources are located;

the quality of those sources; and

how much water they can move to a community that is not a customer (during a drought, for example).

No other utility enjoys a similar privilege to withhold such important data from the public.

One water utility, the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), took the unprecedented and extreme measure of shielding its entire plan under the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's anti-terrorism restriction, immediately after a citizen filed a FOIA request for the MDC's water supply plan.

Citizens should not have to resort to Freedom of Information complaints to receive access to data about their public water. These complaints can take months to be resolved, and even when a citizen prevails, the information can be so heavily redacted as to render it useless.

Access to clean, potable water is a basic human right, and as such, the public has a right to the basic information contained in the water supply plans of our water utilities.

Please support H.B. No. 7221.

Thank you for your consideration.

