



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Public Health Committee

March 13, 2017

**Commissioner Raul Pino, M.D., M.P.H.
860-509-7101**

House Bill 7221 - An Act Concerning Access To Water Planning Information

The Department of Public Health (DPH) supports and provides the following information regarding House Bill 7221, which would ensure that the security concerns of water companies are addressed and that only appropriate information is released to the public. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.

The Department is supportive of the concept outlined in this bill. Should the proposed legislation move forward, it would alleviate the burdensome requirements outlined in current law for disclosing certain information contained in a water company's water supply plan. These plans are often hundreds of pages in length, and it is up to DPH to protect sensitive information within the plan by redacting components that would compromise the security of the water company's infrastructure and supply. The Department disproportionately spends staff time and resources on this task. This bill would streamline the process and ensure that appropriate information can be shared more quickly with the public, when requested.

The Department respectfully recommends that Committee members consider including the following concepts that would further streamline the process:

- Include language in section 3, to amend section 1-210 (b)(29)(B) of the general statutes, to allow for an exemption in order to permit the disclosure of a water company's drought management and response plan to the public.
- Include language in section 3, to amend section 1-210 (b)(29)(D) of the general statutes, to clarify the definition of dam safety plans.
- Amend section 25-32d of the general statutes to require a water company to submit both its water supply plan, and a redacted version of its water supply plan, to the Department of Public Health, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority and the Office of Policy and Management. Such redacted version would contain only information that can be disclosed to the public under the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act. The Department would recommend that the water companies post such redacted plans on their Internet web sites.

Thank you for your consideration of this information. The Department would be happy to provide the Public Health Committee with substitute language.

***Phone: (860) 509-7269,
410 Capitol Avenue - MS # 13GRE, P.O. Box 340308 Hartford, CT 06134
An Equal Opportunity Employer***