



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 662

February Session, 2018

Substitute House Bill No. 5154

House of Representatives, May 2, 2018

The Committee on Environment reported through REP. DEMICCO of the 21st Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING WATER USAGE AND CONSERVATION DURING DROUGHT CONDITIONS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) The Water Planning
2 Council, established pursuant to section 25-330 of the general statutes,
3 shall (1) review state and local authorizations concerning drought
4 events in this state, including, but not limited to, state and local
5 processes and authorities for the issuance of any notices regarding
6 changing drought intensity and any attendant voluntary or mandatory
7 water use restrictions during any such change in drought intensity,
8 and (2) adopt a comprehensive state drought plan based on such
9 review. Not later than February 1, 2019, the Water Planning Council, in
10 accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, shall submit a
11 report to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly
12 having cognizance of matters relating to the environment and public
13 health regarding the state drought plan and any recommendations for
14 legislative changes necessary to implement such plan. The report shall

15 include the council's suggestions for an appropriate interval for
 16 updating the state drought plan and the inclusion of the following in
 17 such plan: (A) A synthesis of such processes, authorities and water use
 18 restrictions, (B) recommendations for initiating drought advisories,
 19 watches, warnings and emergencies in this state, including, but not
 20 limited to, recommendations concerning the appropriate level of
 21 reservoir depletion and public drinking water supply depletion for
 22 triggering any such advisory, watch, warning or emergency, (C)
 23 recommendations for the attendant voluntary and mandatory water
 24 use restrictions for any such drought advisory, watch, warning or
 25 emergency, including, but not limited to, the implementation of
 26 mandatory water use restrictions during any drought advisory or
 27 watch, (D) an effective public notification system for any such drought
 28 advisory, watch, warning or emergency that utilizes any available
 29 Internet web sites and social media of the affected water companies
 30 and municipalities where such water companies operate and that
 31 recommends the appropriate drought level for use of emergency
 32 notification systems as part of such public notification system, and (E)
 33 the viability and effectiveness of enforcement mechanisms designed to
 34 assure compliance with any mandatory water use restrictions. In
 35 undertaking such review, adopting the state drought plan and
 36 developing the report pursuant to this section, the Water Planning
 37 Council may consult with the advisory group established pursuant to
 38 subsection (c) of section 25-33o of the general statutes.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section

ENV *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note***State Impact:*** None***Municipal Impact:*** None***Explanation***

The bill expands the requirements of the Water Planning Council. This has no fiscal impact, as it is anticipated that the Council can fulfill the additional requirements with existing resources.

The Out Years***State Impact:*** None***Municipal Impact:*** None

OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5154

AN ACT CONCERNING WATER USAGE AND CONSERVATION DURING DROUGHT CONDITIONS.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Water Planning Council to:

1. review state and local authorizations on drought events in Connecticut, including state and local processes and authorities for issuing notices about changing drought intensity and any resulting voluntary or mandatory water use restrictions during these changes in intensity and
2. adopt a comprehensive state drought plan based on this review.

To complete its required work, the bill permits the council to consult with its advisory group.

The bill requires the council to report on the state drought plan and any recommended legislative changes to implement the plan to the Environment and Public Health committees by February 1, 2019.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

REPORT CONTENTS

Under the bill, the Water Planning Council's report must include its suggestions for (1) an appropriate interval for updating the state drought plan and (2) including in that plan:

1. a synthesis of state and local authorities, processes, and water use restrictions;
2. recommendations for initiating drought advisories, watches,

- warnings, and emergencies in the state, including the appropriate depletion level of reservoirs and public drinking water supplies to trigger such actions;
3. recommendations for the resulting voluntary and mandatory water use restrictions during these situations, including implementing mandatory restrictions;
 4. an effective public notification system for these situations that (a) uses available Internet websites and social media of affected water companies and municipalities where these water companies operate and (b) recommends the appropriate drought level for using emergency notification systems; and
 5. the viability and effectiveness of enforcement mechanisms designed to assure compliance with mandatory water use restrictions.

BACKGROUND

Legislative History

The House referred the bill (File 349) to the Environment Committee, which reported a substitute that eliminates a reference requiring that the council’s recommendations on initiating drought situations include standardization.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 24 Nay 2 (03/26/2018)

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 27 Nay 1 (04/25/2018)