



Subject: Support for wastewater related legislation – House Bill 5130

Dear Members of the Environmental Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on an important water pollution control legislative Bill that has been proposed. The Connecticut Association of Water Pollution Control Authorities (CAWPCA) is pleased to write this testimony on behalf of our membership. CAWPCA is a group of dedicated to improving, enhancing knowledge and understanding the interests of publicly owned/operated WPCA's or wastewater management entities within the State of Connecticut. The CAWPCA represents the **150+ member communities serving more than 3,000,000 sewered and non-sewered residents**. The CAWPCA Board of Directors is comprised of volunteers who have decades of experience in the management of water pollution control and abatement within the State of Connecticut and surrounding region.

HB 5130, AN ACT CONCERNING THE SEWAGE SPILL RIGHT-TO-KNOW ACT AND EXPANDING CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR WASTEWATER OPERATORS

Bill Summary: To establish a time frame and additional methodology for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to notify the public of unanticipated sewage spills and to require continuing education requirements for wastewater treatment facility operators.

Summary of our Support: Our organization promotes, encourages and values continued learning. The skills required to be a licensed wastewater operator are dynamic, changing constantly with new technologies and regulatory requirements. These skills must be honed and improved in the classroom, in the laboratory, or in the field.

The State invests a significant amount of money into wastewater and this investment needs to be protected for decades. The average wastewater budget in Connecticut is more than \$1 million dollars per year (often as much as 15% - 30% of annual municipal spending). For FY2015 & FY2016, the State of Connecticut invested approximately \$1.5B in Clean Water Funds into capital projects at wastewater utilities. All but \$17M of this money is state funded. Our operators need to be fully trained in the new wastewater technologies that the state is investing so much money in.

This legislation has state-wide support from the entire wastewater community, including:

- State Agencies: CTDEEP and the CT Certification and Advisory Council (CAC)
- Wastewater Associations: the Connecticut Water Pollution Abatement Association (CWAAA), CAWPCA, the New England Water Environment Association (NEWEA), the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC)
- Municipal Utilities: 95% of Wastewater Operators surveyed are in favor of this legislation, 150+ municipal WPCAs representing more than 3,000,000 Connecticut residents, 80+ Water Pollution Control Facilities, and a network of 900 certified operators serving more than 2,000,000 Connecticut residents

It is for these reasons we feel that this new House Bill will support wastewater operators. In conclusion, we speak for the adoption of HB 5130.