



**CONNECTICUT LEAGUE OF
CONSERVATION VOTERS**

March 14, 2018

To: Senator Kennedy, Senator Miner, Representative Demicco, distinguished members of the Environment Committee

From: Lori Brown, Executive Director, CT League of Conservation Voters

Re: **SB 427: THE PUBLIC TRUST COMPONENT OF THE STATE WATER PLAN**
HB 5455: THE STATE WATER PLAN

On behalf of the CT League of Conservation Voters, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on two bills before you relating to oversight and management of our state water resources.

OPPOSE HB 427: This proposal does not merit the endorsement of the Environment Committee. Proponents of this legislation are out of sync with the good will and collaborative effort that went in to crafting the state water plan. This attempt to weaken existing Public Trust law could tangle up efforts to modernize our state water plan in costly legal battles, hinder public involvement, and delay progress on implementing much needed changes to our outdated water management policies.

There is no basis to ask for the exemption of undefined private drinking wells from the public trust. The source of water for these private wells is a groundwater aquifer, which is unquestionably a public trust resource that serves large areas of the State.

We ask that you reject this proposal from further action, leave the existing public trust language unchanged, and instead focus on passing the state water plan without opening new and unnecessary battles this session.

SUPPORT 5455: CTLCV believes the State Water Plan developed by the Water Planning Council is the critical foundation for much work ahead. The goal this year is to adopt the plan “as is” with the understanding that individual proposals will continue to be worked out in the coming months and years. Please do not allow anyone to throw a monkey wrench in this process. We will continue to work with our colleagues, state agencies, advocates, utilities and lawmakers until we have adequately updated our state water policies to reflect the present day need for better protections of this increasingly threatened PUBLIC TRUST RESOURCE.

CTL CV also strongly support the proposed reporting requirements included in HB 5455. This will allow the public and their elected leaders to continue to evaluate changes to the plan and provide important oversight as the plan is implemented.

For all the reasons above, CTL CV asks you to support passage of the State Water Plan and the reporting requirements as presented in HB 5455.

Thank you for considering this testimony.

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