



Public Hearing – March 14, 2018
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Robert Klee

SB 427 – AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC TRUST COMPONENTS OF THE STATE WATER PLAN

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding SB 427.

The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) has significant concerns about this bill. The specific exclusion of the ambiguous term “private drinking wells” from existing language regarding public trust resources may result in unanticipated impacts to private residential drinking water wells through omission, when approximately 23 percent of Connecticut residents rely on residential drinking water wells.

No waters of the state should be excluded from public trust. The connected, common ground water resource from which any well draws water must continue to be included in this law. Public trust is foundational to Connecticut’s water resource management structure and the Department’s ability to protect, preserve and enhance our water resources.

The stated purpose of the bill is to exclude private wells from regulation by the state water plan. The State Water Plan is not a regulation and does not govern how private wells are regulated in this state. The authorities and regulations regarding permitting, construction and testing of private wells are within the jurisdictions of the Department of Public Health and Department of Consumer Protection, and the State Water Plan does not make changes to those authorities. Any recommendations made in the State Water Plan regarding private wells will by necessity and law be fully vetted through the appropriate legislative or regulatory process.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact DEEP’s legislative liaison, Lee Sawyer at 860-424-3332 or Lee.Sawyer@ct.gov.