

Dear Co-chairs Senator Kennedy, Senator Miner, Representative Demicco and Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 427. We should not attempting to privatize all wells in the state, deliberately removing them from the umbrella of the public trust doctrine laid out in CT Statute Section 22a-15: "there is a public trust in the air, water and other natural resources of the state".

This bill poses a threat to public control of our precious water resources. We need to hold these in trust for future generations, not put them at risk for being used short term profit of a select few.

An op-ed in the New Britain Herald recently discussed the multiple threats posed by private use of our public waters, in that case a proposed Tilcon mining expansion. As the editors noted, "We only have one planet and we need to treat it like the irreplaceable gem it is."

If SB 427 passes, large private water utilities with well fields supplying CT drinking water could declare that they "own the groundwater". A major bottling company could purchase lands, drill multiple wells, and escape any regulation while exporting the water out of state for profit. In the case of drought, "well owners" could refuse to comply with any water use restrictions. Withdrawal from wells could impact the surface rivers and reservoirs with which they are hydrologically connected yet be deemed untouchable as a "private" resource.

I urge you to oppose SB 427.

Sincerely, Gerard Lafleur Manchester Ct