

Members of the Environmental Committee,

You have been elected and granted the privilege to represent the people of Connecticut, by the people of Connecticut and there for have a responsibility to act in our interests – not corporate interests.

I object to any and all attempts by this committee and corporate interests trying to circumvent 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." We have seen the effects of corporate greed in Maine, California, New Mexico and other states by the private water industry and their ability to go unregulated because of lack of enforcement and authority provided by the laws of those states.

This is exactly what this bill, SB-427, attempts to do here in Connecticut. Under the proposed Senate Bill 427 you are granting private corporations and water utilities, both foreign and domestic, the ability to 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 hydro-logically connected yet be deemed untouchable as a "private" resource.

It is your responsibility to keep the air, water and other natural resources protected and in public trust for all citizens, current and future, of State of Connecticut.

Our first ever state water plan is awaiting passage at the legislature. This bill attempts to circumvent the water plan's balanced and scientific approach to state water decisions and override the foundational principle that our state waters are a resource to be protected and managed for all.

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WATER IS A PUBLIC RESOURCE, BELONGING TO THE PEOPLE OF CT AND HELD IN TRUST BY THE STATE TO BE MANAGED SUSTAINABLY FOR THE BENEFIT OF GENERATIONS TO COME.