Rivers Alliance was formed to fight for sound water policies at the state and federal levels, to provide education on water resources, and to advocate for any person or group striving to protect water. If you want clean, free-flowing and healthy rivers, and high-quality drinking water, Rivers Alliance is here to help.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the following raised bills before you today.

**HB 5417 AAC THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH STATUTES**

Our comments are specific to Secs. 3 and 4 of this proposed bill. We support the concept of this proposal but ask that the committee proceed with caution.

The intention of this proposal is to reduce the number of projects reviewed by the Department of Public Health on residential properties within aquifer protection areas and the watershed of a water company land, reserving the right to review all commercial and industrial projects. We appreciate the agency’s desire to reduce the number of de minimis projects in these areas so those tasked with reviewing the projects can focus on (and not miss) projects that pose a threat to our water resources. **However, the 5-acre threshold is much too large.** Water quality and land use are inextricably linked and a large increase in impervious surfaces could severely limit infiltration and degrade water quality of surface waters.

A threshold of half acre to one acre would be much more appropriate. Please ensure that this bill passes with a lower acreage threshold for residential projects that will be more protective of our drinking water quantity and quality. The threshold should not exceed one acre.

**HB 5291 AA LIMITING THE USE OF PERFLUOROALKYL AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES AND EXPANDED POLYSTYRENE IN FOOD PACKAGING, Support**

Thank you for taking strong and timely action on the dangers that perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl (commonly known collectively as PFAS) substances present to our environmental and public health.
PFAS chemicals are strongly linked to kidney and testicular cancer, hormone disruption, liver toxicity, high cholesterol, harm to the immune system, and reduced birth weight. Chemical companies claim that newer “short chain” variations are safe. This is not true. The limited research on newer short chain PFAS show similar health impacts.

PFAS chemicals migrate from packaging to food. Furthermore, in investigating sources of PFAS contamination here in Connecticut, PFAS has been found in ground and surface waters adjacent to landfills. Considering that most food packaging is single-use and gets tossed in the trash, we should be doing everything possible to avoid adding to what is already an expensive threat to public health.

With no firm resolution to phase PFAS out of consumer products, remediation efforts will never end and there will be no meaningful reduction in exposure of Connecticut’s citizens to PFAS. A mere evaluation and identification of consumer products that may contain PFAS, as proposed in Connecticut’s PFAS action plan, does not go far enough. Connecticut must act now to ban PFAS chemicals in food packaging.

We must act now to turn off the tap on PFAS. Please pass this bill.