



Testimony
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Connecticut Water Works Association (CWVA)
Environment Committee
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The Connecticut Water Works Association (CWVA), a trade association of private, municipal and regional water authorities, **supports Sections 19 – 23 of HB-6441** which authorize the Connecticut Green bank to invest in green infrastructure, including water infrastructure.

As stewards of the state’s water resources, Connecticut’s water utilities are committed to providing residents and businesses with safe, high quality drinking water supplies to meet public health, public safety and economic development needs. To meet these goals, Connecticut’s public water suppliers are replacing aging infrastructure, improving the efficiency of treatment and distribution systems, addressing the need for greater resiliency and reliability, and moving forward with system upgrades necessitated by new and emerging state and federal laws and regulations.

Recognizing the potential impact of climate change, including severe storm events, increased flooding, and rising water temperatures on water quality and critical water system components, Connecticut’s water companies are addressing the need for greater resiliency by:

- Actively participating in planning efforts that include identifying system vulnerabilities and redundancy needs, including developing and updating comprehensive water supply plans, emergency management plans and participating in the Water Utility Coordinating Committee process;
- Floodproofing and hardening vulnerable system components, including pump stations, system intakes, wells, dams, water distribution systems and water treatment facilities;
- Utilizing a variety of reservoir management approaches to reduce, avoid, or eliminate harmful Cyanobacterial blooms;
- Using renewable energy products, including solar arrays, to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions associated with energy intensive water distribution systems and water treatment facilities;
- Providing for redundancies in water supplies, such as interconnections and back up wells; and
- Maintaining redundant power supplies, such as emergency generators.



Given the significant costs associated with meeting these challenges, however, water utilities, regardless of the form of ownership, need access to grant funding. Currently, water utilities can obtain low interest loans under the state's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, but there are very limited opportunities to obtain direct grants. Without grant funding, many water infrastructure projects are put on hold.

CWWA therefore supports the provisions in the bill which authorize the Connecticut Green Bank to leverage state and federal funding to fund infrastructure improvements, including projects related to water treatment plants, distribution systems and pumping stations, wastewater treatment plants, collections systems and pumping stations, environmental infrastructure, green technology, and photovoltaic facilities.

In addition, CWWA supports the recommendations of the Governor's Council on Climate Changes to assist water utilities in funding the construction of high-priority water supply interconnections and emergency interconnections to improve resiliency and minimize water supply disruptions.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of these provisions in the bill.

The Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA) is a trade association of municipal, regional, and private water utilities committed to supporting legislative & regulatory policies that ensure that water utilities can continue to provide the state's residents and businesses with safe, high quality public water supplies at a reasonable cost. CWWA's members serve more than 2 ½ million people throughout Connecticut.