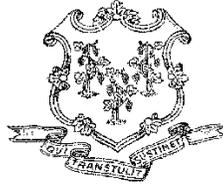


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March 3, 2021

Good morning Sen. Cohen, Rep. Borer and members of the Environment Committee. I would like to express my support for SB 927, AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE SEWAGE SPILL RIGHT-TO-KNOW STATUTE.

On July 6, 2020 a large sewer pipe broke and released over two million gallons of sewage out onto Whitney Avenue on the New Haven/ Hamden line near the Eli Whitney Barn and into the nearby Mill River. This is a river in which people swim and fish and hunt for crabs. In addition, the trails along the river are popular for hikers and bicyclists.

According to press reports¹ the Water Pollution Control Authority did not notify the City of New Haven for more than a day. It may have notified the Town of Hamden earlier. The current Connecticut statute requires only that the chief elected official of the town where the spill occurred be notified² within two hours. The danger from large sewage spills such as this one do

¹

https://www.newhavenindependent.org/index.php/archives/entry/sewer_breakswage_into_mill_river/

² 22a-424(c)

(3) On and after July 1, 2018, not later than two hours after becoming aware of any sewage spill that exceeds five thousand gallons or that is anticipated to exceed five thousand gallons, the operator of a sewage treatment plant or collection system shall notify the chief elected official of the municipality where the sewage spill occurred. As soon

not end at the town line; our statutes must require notification to the surrounding municipalities and to the public as well.

SB 927 would expand the notification requirements to include the chief elected officer and health director of any municipality that would be potentially impacted by the spill. The bill also requires the municipality to inform the public of the spill within two hours of receiving notification. This is a long overdue change that will protect the health of residents of our state.

Thank you for hearing this important legislation

as practicable after receiving any such notification, such municipality shall inform the public and downstream public officials, as appropriate.