



**For the Environment Committee
Testimony of Alicea Charamut, Executive Director
February 20, 2026**

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 bill before you today.

HB 5155 AA CONCERNING PESTICIDE REPORTING MODERNIZATION – Supports

Rivers Alliance supports this bill because sound policy for clean water depends on sound data. Yet Connecticut lacks the modern reporting infrastructure necessary to understand how pesticide use is affecting our rivers, aquifers, drinking water supplies, and Long Island Sound.

Why This Bill Matters for Water Protection

Pesticides are a significant source of nonpoint source pollution. Unlike a discharge pipe, pesticide runoff enters our waters through rainfall, irrigation, stormwater systems, and groundwater infiltration. Without reliable, location-specific reporting, it is impossible to:

- Track cumulative watershed impacts
- Identify hotspots of contamination
- Correlate pesticide use with water quality monitoring data
- Protect drinking water reservoirs and aquifers
- Evaluate impacts to Long Island Sound

Data from the U.S. Geological Survey and other monitoring programs have already documented pesticides that impact water quality and biodiversity in Connecticut's rivers. Shellfish commissioners have raised concerns about contamination and ecosystem impacts in Long Island Sound. Yet our reporting system does not provide sufficient spatial data to connect application practices with water quality outcomes.

You cannot manage what you cannot measure.

Closing Critical Data Gaps

A recent Connecticut Council on Environmental Quality report, “Pesticides in Connecticut,” identifies significant deficiencies in how pesticide use data is collected and accessed. From a water protection standpoint, these gaps undermine watershed planning and pollution prevention efforts.

In particular:

- No locational data are required to be submitted to DEEP for restricted-use pesticides applied by Commercial Supervisors.
- The annual records of restricted-use pesticides sold in Connecticut are not available through the eLicense system.

Alignment with Connecticut’s Water Planning and Resilience Goals

Modernized reporting is consistent with DEEP’s 20BY26 Initiative, particularly its goals to modernize record management and integrate mapping and data systems.

It is also consistent with the Connecticut State Water Plan, which calls for improved data integration, interagency coordination, and science-based decision-making to protect public water supplies and ecological health.

If Connecticut is serious about resilience, we must recognize that more intense rain events increase the transport of contaminants from land to water. Accurate pesticide reporting will become even more critical as storm patterns shift and runoff intensifies.

Strengthening the Bill

Rivers Alliance supports strengthening the bill to explicitly require the collection of locational data for both restricted-use and general-use pesticides applied or directed by Commercial Supervisors. Watershed-level protection requires geographic specificity.

Conclusion

Raised House Bill No. 5155 is fundamentally about improving Connecticut’s ability to understand how chemicals used in pesticides move through our landscape and into our waters. For rivers, aquifers, reservoirs, and Long Island Sound, better data means better protection.

Rivers Alliance of Connecticut respectfully urges the Committee to support passage of Raised House Bill No. 5155 and to strengthen it by ensuring collection of locational data.

Thank you for your leadership and your continued commitment to protecting Connecticut’s waters.