



Raised Senate Bill No. 427
AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC TRUST COMPONENTS OF THE STATE WATER PLAN

Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition
Testimony in Objection to the Act
March 12, 2018

The Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition (PRWC) is a 501c3 organization that was founded in 1999 in response to the increasing pressures that land development activities threatened to put on the local water supply. Since then, PRWC has evolved into a nationally recognized model for scientific investigation, municipal assistance, stakeholder collaboration, community education, and volunteer engagement. Today, PRWC's mission is to ensure the availability of high quality water in the Pomperaug River watershed communities in Litchfield and New Haven counties through the use of science and education. We share our knowledge and expertise with others committed to the protection of water resources for future generations.

PRWC assisted with the development of the State Water Plan ("Plan") through its participation as a member of both the Water Planning Council Advisory Group and the Plan's Science & Technical Committee. As a science and research based organization, our goal was to export local knowledge of the Pomperaug River Watershed (one of the 44 regional basins studied within the Plan) into the Plan with the desired outcome that the Plan would establish a framework that would provide for future policies to address water resource balance. Our coalition-based work within the watershed is in itself a balance of source protection and water use stewardship.

Raised Senate Bill 427 is not consistent with the balanced goals of the Plan and it is destructive to the citizens of the State of Connecticut by damaging the core understanding of all water being protected as a natural resource. It arbitrarily singles one of the numerous ways on how water is used in the State by calling for the exemption of "private wells" thereby challenging the definition of public trust. Furthermore, the use of the term "private wells" is fraught with uncertainty. This Bill will cause public health, environmental and economic hardships for the residents of our State.

PRWC strongly objects to this Bill and requests that it be denied. The State Legislature has made a significant investment in developing the Plan and there is a tremendous opportunity ahead in using the Plan to thoughtfully address water resource matters and avoid ill conceived actions such as this Bill. PRWC appreciates this opportunity to provide these comments.

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