



Connecticut Water Pollution Abatement Association

Dedicated to the pursuit of pure water...

February 15, 2017

RE: House Bills 5042, 5557, 6676 and Senate Bills 289 & 559 and their unintended effects on the Wastewater Community of Connecticut

Members of the Planning and Development Committees,

The Connecticut Water Pollution Abatement Association (CWPA) was formed in 1966 to support wastewater issues for the State of Connecticut. We represent more than 80 Water Pollution Control Facilities and a network of over 900 certified wastewater operators serving more than 2,000,000 Connecticut residents. As representatives of the CWPA, we wish to provide commentary on the proposed Bills that will affect the Connecticut wastewater community.

SB 289 An Act Concerning Criteria for Certain Wastewater Facility Operator Licenses

Bill Summary: That the general statutes be amended to provide that a certain number of years of higher education may be substituted for hands-on experience at a wastewater facility in order to obtain a class four chief operator license.

CWPA Position: The CWPA strongly supports continuing education requirements for wastewater licensure. However, we feel strongly that success as a licensed wastewater operator is achieved outside the classroom. The current system requires that operators are trained on the job and through this experience, operators gain a knowledge of engineering, biology, chemistry, electronics, mechanics as well as problem solving skills. We feel that the existing provisions required for wastewater operators be maintained and we are opposed to HB 5557.

SB 559 An Act Concerning the Restriction of Municipal Sewage Systems Assignees

Bill Summary: That the general statutes be amended to restrict assignees of water pollution control authorities from purchasing foreclosed properties and to establish financial guidelines that trigger foreclosure.

CWPA Position: The CWPA intends to monitor SB 559. We have concerns with additional State restrictions being put upon local Water Pollution Control Authorities, which already operate with significant constraints and requirements. We may provide additional comment as details on SB 559 evolve.

HB 5042 An Act Concerning Sewer Use Charges

Bill Summary: To prevent sewer authorities from charging sewer use charges for summer water use.

CWPA Position: Similar to when this concept was introduced in 2016, CWPA remains strongly opposed to HB 5042. Each individual WPCA is required to set Sewer Use Fees at their local level. There are multitudes of rate collection models, with the majority having adjustments for summer water usage. The State should not dictate how a WPCA sets its local sewer rate structure and there is a local public



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process for anyone who disagrees with a WPCA rate structure.

HB 5557 An Act Concerning Sewer Assessment Appeals

Bill Summary: Proposed bill HB 5557 proposes that the general statutes be amended to require municipalities to permit property owners to appeal sewer assessments to the board of assessment appeals.

CWPAA Position: The Connecticut General Statutes prescribe a detailed process in which sewer assessment appeals are made to the courts. We are not in favor of changing the appeals provision to include municipal boards of assessment who are not experienced with sewer systems and sewer projects. While CWPAA supports revisiting the sewer assessment appeals process, we feel strongly that municipal boards of assessment should remain uninvolved.

HB 6676 An Act Concerning Interest Due on Delinquent Sewer Assessments

Bill Summary: That the general statutes be amended to permit municipalities to lower the interest rate charge on delinquent sewer assessments.


CWPAA Position: The CWPAA intends to monitor SB 6676. We have concerns with additional State restrictions being put upon local Water Pollution Control Authorities, which already operate with significant constraints and requirements. We may provide additional comment as details on SB 6676 evolve.

Thank you for your letting us provide our comments on these issues.

Sincerely,


Michael J. Bisi
CWPAA President

Superintendent of Sanitation
Town of Glastonbury


Jay G Sheehan, PE
CWPAA Board of Directors

Vice Chairman, Simsbury WPCA
Sr. VP, Woodard & Curran – Enfield & Middletown