

Housing Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1307

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A WORKING GROUP TO STUDY AND DEVELOP
BEST PRACTICES TO PROMOTE HOUSING GROWTH AND PROTECT THE

Title: STATE'S WATER SUPPLY.

Vote Date: 2/20/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/18/2025

File No.: 49

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Housing Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The intent of this bill is to create a working group that would study and develop the best practices to promote housing growth and protect the state's water supply.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Francis Pickering, Executive Director, Western Connecticut Council of Governments](#): Mr. Pickering and the Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG) supports this legislation. He recommended the working group should consider: adopting an evidence-based policy solutions that reflect best practices from neighboring states and national models, ensuring that water quality protections are enforceable, integrating regional planning expertise to align water protection policies with housing and infrastructure needs, and addressing municipal implementation challenges to ensure that local regulations are effective and achievable.

[Denise Savageau, Chair, Council on Soil and Water Conservation and Water Planning Council Advisory Group](#): Ms. Savageau and the Connecticut Council on Soil and Water Conservation support this bill. Ms. Savageau stated that clear understanding of our water supply, its origins and its management, are important. They suggested adding additional members, included representatives from PURA, the Water Planning Council, and the Water Planning Council Advisory Group.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[John Guskowski, Government Relations Committee Co-Chair, Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association](#): Mr. Guskowski stated in his testimony that the Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association (CCAPA) supports this bill. He stated that while Connecticut's public and private water systems have been operated well, providing "abundant and safe drinking water" and "a renewed focus on housing growth" will greatly benefit the state.

[Jim Perras, CEO, Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Connecticut](#): Mr. Perras stated that the Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Connecticut (HBRA-CT) supports this bill with suggested amendments, stating, "We recognize an adequate housing supply is essential to maintain a healthy economy and for ensuring the wellbeing of our state's residents." Mr. Perras also outlined the following amendments that HBRA-CT would like to see added to the bill: uniformity and transparency in water utility practices, creation of a builder's bill of rights, and the establishment of an independent ombudsman for builders and developers.

[Elizabeth Gara, Executive Director, Connecticut Water Works Association](#): Ms. Gara provided general comments on the bill. Ms. Gara stated the Connecticut Water Works Association is committed to efforts to protect the safety, quality, and availability of the state's public water supplies, including the development and implementation of comprehensive source water protection programs and the prohibition or limitation of certain activities on public water supply watershed lands that may compromise water quality safety and availability. Ms. Gara stated that Connecticut's Affordable Housing Appeals process has been used to approve high density developments on public water supply watershed land, "Unfortunately, the 8-30g process does not provide a mechanism for fully considering the potential impact of certain housing developments on Connecticut's public water supplies." Ms. Gara concluded, "CWWA also respectfully requests that the working group include representatives from the water industry to ensure that these issues are fully addressed."

[Debra Churchill, Property Manager, The Connecticut Apartment Association](#): The Connecticut Apartment Association stated their support for this bill in order to "study methods to increase accountability and transparency."

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Arianna Tsikitas, Clerk
Chris Peritore, Assistant Clerk

Date: 3/4/2025