



**Testimony
Elizabeth Gara
Connecticut Water Works Association
Before the
Appropriations Committee
March 2, 2021**

RE: HB- 6439 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH, 2023, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR

The Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA), which represents municipal, regional and private water companies throughout Connecticut, appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed budget as it pertains to the state Department of Public Health (DPH).

As stewards of the environment, Connecticut's public water suppliers are committed to providing residents and businesses with safe, high quality public water supplies at a reasonable cost. Accordingly, CWWA representatives actively participated in the efforts of Governor Lamont's Interagency PFAS Working Group to develop an Action Plan for addressing concerns regarding per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, generally referred to as PFAS.

CWWA supports the provisions in the Governor's proposed budget which are aimed at addressing concerns regarding the effects of PFAS, including the creation of a Safe Drinking Water Advisory Council comprised of scientists and other stakeholders to develop guidelines for PFAS and drinking water, develop a takeback program to assist firefighters in replacing PFAS containing firefighting foam with safe alternatives, and direct DEEP to perform surface water and sediment sampling.

As proposed, Governor Lamont's budget includes the following funding to implement certain recommendations of the Governor's PFAS Working Group:

- \$408,000 in FY 22 and \$420,000 in FY 23 for one Toxicologist, one Laboratory Consultant, one Chemist, and one Environmental Analyst to assist with updating standards and action levels for drinking water, review laboratories to become approved for PFAS testing, implement PFAS testing of drinking water at the State's public health laboratory, support testing of public water systems, and educate stakeholders to protect the public health from the impacts of PFAS in drinking water;
- \$100,000 for laboratory testing supplies;
- \$110,548 in FY 22 and \$114,800 in FY 23 to support one engineering Intern to enhance the state's response to drinking water issues in schools undergoing construction

projects, and one Environmental Analyst to assist the agency in its continued administration of safe drinking water standards for public drinking water.

This funding will supplement funding included in the proposed bond package, SB-887, which calls for \$1,150,000 to provide grants-in-aid to municipalities for the purpose of providing potable water and for assessment and remedial action to address pollution from PFAS containing substances.

In addition, Public Act 20-1, Section 13(d) includes \$2 million in bond funding for the purposes of testing for pollution from PFAS, providing potable water to persons affected by such pollution and for buyback of aqueous film-forming firefighting foam containing PFAS. In addition, \$750,000 in bond funding was authorized in 2019 to assist DEEP in implementing anti-pollution controls and improvements at five old state-supervised landfills, including two known to be leaking hazardous man-made chemicals known as PFAS.

The funding in the proposed budget and bond package recognize that given the wide range of possible contributors of PFAS in the environment, a comprehensive approach is necessary to 1) prevent the introduction of PFAS in the environment, including the land, air, and water; and 2) determine areas that have been contaminated with PFAS compounds and remediate such areas. Preventing the introduction of PFAS in the environment and remediating areas contaminated with PFAS compounds is the most cost-effective way of protecting the quality and safety of Connecticut's public water supplies.

The Connecticut Water Works Association, Inc. (CWWA) is an association of private, municipal and regional public water supply utilities serving more than 500,000 customers, or population of about 2½ million people, located throughout Connecticut.