

**Testimony**  
**Elizabeth Gara**  
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**Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA)**  
**Before the Public Health Committee**  
**March 13, 2026**

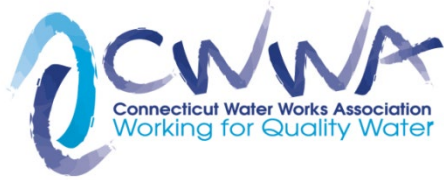
The Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA), which represents municipal, private, and regional water companies serving customers throughout Connecticut **opposes HB-5518, AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND DRINKING WATER STATUTES.**

Section 3 of HB-5518 gives the State Department of Public Health (DPH) broad latitude to set action levels for per- and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) and other unregulated contaminants in bottled water outside of the formal rulemaking process pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act (UAPA) or other process that ensures that critical perspectives are considered, including epidemiology and toxicology reports, health effects data, and the impact on regulated entities.

In the last few years, the department has increasingly relied on the use of “policies and procedures” to enact a wide range of regulatory changes. However, given the complexity and potential impact and costs associated with setting action levels for PFAS and other unregulated contaminants, CWWA does not believe it is appropriate to permit such changes to be adopted outside of the formal UAPA process or other formal process that provides opportunities for stakeholder input.

The UAPA process ensures that parties have proper notice and an opportunity to comment on proposed regulations. Parties may also seek other legal remedies, such as a declaratory ruling to determine the appropriateness of a proposed regulation. UAPA also requires review of a proposed regulation by the Attorney General’s Office for purposes of legal sufficiency, review by the Office of Fiscal Analysis to determine the fiscal impact, and review by the legislature’s Regulation Review Committee. This robust and balanced process should not be sidestepped particularly given the complexity of setting action levels.

Although the bill, as drafted, is intended to be limited to bottled water, CWWA is concerned that this same process will be relied on to set or revise action levels for drinking water supplies. In addition, the reference to “drinking water” in the bill creates confusion as to the applicability of these provisions. Although “drinking water”



is defined in Section 1(7) as bottled water, generally, drinking water is considered potable water supplies from a water company or private well.

Under existing state and federal regulations, Connecticut's water companies are moving forward with efforts to comply with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) for six PFAS chemicals and DPH's action levels for ten 10 PFAS substances.

To comply with these requirements, water companies are investing considerable time and resources in performing the required water sampling, communicating with the public regarding results, and investing in solutions, if needed, to address PFAS contamination, such as carbon filtration or identifying new sources of supply. Compliance requires considerable planning, including budgeting and securing financing for additional costs associated with testing, remediation, and possibly the development of new wellfields or interconnections.

CWWA is concerned that HB-5518 establishes a precedent that would allow the state to revise its action levels or set MCLs using "policies and procedures", undermining or confusing ongoing efforts to comply with state and federal requirements relative to PFAS.

Accordingly, we urge the committee to **reject** these provisions.

Similarly, the bill allows the department to enact certain changes to environmental laboratories using "policies and procedures". Again, we have concerns that this circumvents the well-established UAPA process that provides meaningful opportunity to comment on issues affecting laboratories that water companies and others rely on to perform critical testing and analysis.

Moreover, it is uncertain how the provisions in the bill overlap or conflict with the responsibilities of a certified operator or employee under the certified operator's charge. CWWA **opposes** these provisions.

CWWA respectfully requests the opportunity to meet with lawmakers and the department to discuss these provisions further and any potential impact on water companies that may undermine efforts to provide safe, high-quality drinking water to meet the public health and safety needs of our customers.

Thank you.

*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.*