

**Testimony of  
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Deputy Director  
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City of Groton, Department of Utilities**

**HB 5470**

Good morning. My name is Alfred C. Dion and I am Deputy Director, Water and Wastewater for the City of Groton Department of Utilities, known as Groton Utilities. Our offices are located at 295 Meridian Street, Groton, Connecticut. I have been an employee of Groton Utilities for over 40 years.

Groton Utilities is currently working with regional partners to supply water to several Southeastern Connecticut communities through the Thames River Regional Pipeline. This program, which fosters cooperation with several local communities, is an effort to find and share resources within a larger regional community. Because of the importance of such a venture, we are currently seeking both cooperation and funding for the preparation of a Drinking Water Quality Management Plan.

The Plan will address immediate concerns related to the distribution of clean drinking water to surrounding communities, as well as bringing together regional stakeholders for the implementation of measures to protect the vital resources necessary to ensure an adequate and pure supply for the future.

With these goals in mind, Groton Utilities must point out that development proposals within the current watershed and future source watersheds continue to arrive at local planning departments and project management offices. Within current regulatory guidelines and zoning district regulations, there is a potential for continued growth that, if not more closely managed may result in a cumulative degradation of water supply quality through a build-up of contaminants present in non-point stormwater runoff and direct discharges to streams flowing directly into the reservoirs. The Drinking Water Quality Management Plan, through local community involvement and regional cooperation, will provide for “low impact development” while fostering a coordinated approach for balance economic growth and critical resource protection.

Groton Utilities stands ready to work with local and regional stakeholders as well as the DPH in partnership to:

- Address concerns regarding growth, while working toward a sustainable economic base in harmony with the environment – in essence, a holistic approach to watershed development and protection.
- Continue a trend with interested parties to provide for development of facilities within the watershed that are beneficial to the community – for example, the expansion of the Pequot Medical Center and the construction of the nearby Marriott Hotel.
- Share the benefits and responsibilities for current and future water supply sources, particularly since these watershed sources now cross two political boundaries and will potentially cross several more.
- And to allow communities the opportunity to participate in setting water resource goals, values and standards that meet a common regional need and reinforce community will.

The Drinking Water Quality Management Plan, while drawing together other existing reports and plans for the region will be an Implementation Plan – not a Study!

Thank you for your consideration.