

CONNECTICUT  
Land Conservation Council

Testimony on Raised Senate Bill No. 427  
Environment Committee  
Submitted by Amy Blaymore Paterson, Esq., Executive Director  
Connecticut Land Conservation Council  
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Senator Kennedy, Senator Miner, Representative Demicco, Ranking Member Harding, and Members of the Environment Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony in opposition to **Raised Senate Bill No. 427: An Act Concerning the Public Trust Components of the State Water Plan (SB427)**.

As the state's umbrella organization for the land conservation community, including its 137+/- land trusts, the Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) advocates for land conservation, stewardship and funding, and works to ensure the long-term strength and viability of the land conservation community in Connecticut.

CLCC opposes SB427 which would remove protection under the public trust doctrine for water from "private wells". The public trust doctrine, set forth as state policy in Connecticut General Statutes Section 22a-15, is intended to protect air, water, public lands, and other natural resources *in perpetuity* for the benefit of current and future generations. The public trust doctrine is particularly important to the protection of water resources which flow irrespective of political boundaries.

Carving out protection for private well water fails to recognize this principle and may set a dangerous precedent for approving future exceptions to this important foundational principle of environmental law. We respectfully urge the Committee to vote no on this amendment.

On behalf of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council, I thank you for this opportunity to provide our comments and would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

