



Making Great Communities Happen
**Connecticut Chapter of the
American Planning Association**

Testimony regarding

House Bill No. 5416 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE THRESHOLD FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION'S REVIEW OF COMMUNITY WATER SYSTEMS

CCAPA supports this bill. Approximately 40% of Connecticut is not served by public sewer utilities, and any new development in these areas is dependent on the use of individual or community septic systems. The regulatory burden of installing systems larger than 5,000 gallons per day (gpd) can be excessive – not only in fees, but particularly in time and uncertainty. Right now, developers avoid building projects with more than 33 bedrooms because the regulatory process for larger septic systems (regulated by DEEP) is so much longer, and therefore riskier, than the regulatory process for smaller septic systems (regulated by the Department of Public Health). Developers avoid building more than 16 two-bedroom housing units (32 bedrooms) or 33 one-bedroom units at a time. This artificial threshold limits Connecticut communities' ability to accommodate more housing in places it is desired. While the communities, the soils, and the real estate market might easily be able to support more units in a development, the fears of a lengthy and uncertain permitting process can be too daunting for real estate investors.

Increasing the threshold of community water system size from 5,000 gpd to 7,500 gpd would greatly increase the cost-certainty for developers and communities seeking to increase housing options in more rural areas of the state. The change would raise the potential size of a community septic system regulated by DPH from 33 to 50 one-bedrooms and from 16 to 25 two-bedrooms, significantly increasing the potential size of developments with community septic system and supporting community goals for housing and community growth.

WHO WE ARE

The Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association (CCAPA) has over 420 members who are governmental and consulting planners, land use attorneys, citizen planners, and other professionals engaged in planning and managing land use, economic development, housing, transportation, and conservation for local, regional, and State governments, private businesses and other entities. CCAPA has long been committed to assisting the legislature and State agencies with developing and furthering responsible growth management principles. The APA is an independent, not-for-profit, national educational organization that provides leadership in the development of vital communities.

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