



October 30, 2017

Senator Anne Gobi, Senate Chair
Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture
Room 513, State House
Boston, MA 02133

Andrew Gottlieb
Executive Director

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Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture
Room 473F, State House
Boston, MA 02133

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RE: Support for S.425/H.2115, *An Act Relative to Drought Management*

Maureen O'Shea
Clerk

Dear Chairwoman Gobi and Chairman Pignatelli:

Elliott Carr

The Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC) offers this written testimony in support of *An Act Relative to Drought Management* (S.425/H.2115) and urges the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture to report this bill out with a favorable recommendation.

Robert Ciolek

Michael Corrigan

DeeDee Holt

Thomas Huettner

Founded in 1968, APCC is the Cape Cod region's leading nonprofit environmental advocacy and education organization, working for the adoption of laws, policies and programs that protect and enhance Cape Cod's natural resources and quality of life.

Pat Hughes

Cheryl Lubin

Blue Magruder

S.425/H.2115 provides the Commonwealth of Massachusetts with the means to enact consistent water use restrictions within a designated drought region. Currently, only a municipality has the authority to enact outdoor watering use restrictions during a drought situation, while the state's secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs can only issue recommendations for such restrictions. This has led to inconsistent and therefore ineffective water management and conservation practices among municipalities sharing a watershed affected by drought.

Eliza McClennen

Donald Palladino

Kris Ramsay

As an EPA-designated sole source aquifer, the entire Cape Cod region's water supply comes from groundwater, which is recharged exclusively by precipitation. In summer months when the Cape's population increases substantially, water demand more than doubles across the region. This extra demand, compounded by a severe drought, can reduce the level of the aquifer and adversely impact sensitive surface water features such as ponds, streams, vernal pools and other wetlands in the Zone II of supply wells, and particularly those wetland resources close to the wells. During drought situations, an incompatible assortment of water use requirements among Cape Cod towns withdrawing from the same groundwater source translates into a poor water management policy for the region and for the state.

S.25/H.2115 gives the EOEEA secretary the authority to impose uniform nonessential water use restrictions for a drought region, with exemptions for agricultural uses and water uses

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essential to the operation of certain businesses such as plant nurseries and golf courses.

With the likelihood of more frequent and more severe droughts predicted for the northeast due to climate change, it is prudent for the state to set in place a procedure that insures Massachusetts is prepared to respond appropriately to the challenges and impacts brought about by drought. APCC therefore requests that the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture act swiftly in reporting out *An Act Relative to Drought Management*.

APCC thanks the committee chairs and members of the committee for this opportunity to provide written testimony and for the committee's careful consideration of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Gottlieb', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andrew Gottlieb
Executive Director

cc: Sen. Julian Cyr
Sen. Viriato deMacedo
Rep. Sarah Peake
Rep. Timothy Whelan
Rep. William Crocker
Rep. David Vieira
Rep. Dylan Fernandes
Rep. Randy Hunt
Sen. James Eldridge
Rep. Carolyn Dykema