



October 26, 2021

Andrew Gottlieb
Executive Director

The Honorable Rebecca L. Rausch, Senate Chair
The Honorable Carolyn C. Dykema, House Chair

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Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture

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RE: An Act Relative to Maintaining Adequate Water Supplies Through Effective Drought Management (H.898/S.530)

Jack Looney
Clerk

Dear Chair Rausch and Chair Dykema:

John Cumbler

The Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC) submits this written testimony in strong support of An Act Relative to Maintaining Adequate Water Supplies Through Effective Drought Management (H.898/S.530) and respectfully urges the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture to report this bill out with a favorable recommendation.

Margo Fenn

Joshua Goldberg

DeeDee Holt

Thomas Huettner

Pat Hughes

Founded in 1968, APCC is the Cape region’s leading nonprofit environmental advocacy and education organization, working for the adoption of laws, policies and programs that protect, preserve and restore Cape Cod’s natural resources. APCC focuses our efforts on the protection of groundwater, surface water, and wetland resources, preservation of open space, the promotion of responsible, planned growth and the achievement of an environmental ethic.

Steven Koppel

Elyse Magnotto-Cleary

Blue Magruder

Eliza McClennen

Stephen Mealy

After experiencing the effects of an extended period of drought on much of Cape Cod in 2020 and 2021, and with the expectation that climate change will cause more drought occurrences in the future, it is apparent that the Commonwealth must set in place strategies for responding early and uniformly to drought occurrences in order to help minimize their impacts on the environment and human health. H.898/S.530 provides the necessary mechanism for this to occur.

Wendy Northcross

Kris Ramsay

Robert Summersgill

Taryn Wilson

H.898/S.530 is commonsense legislation that gives the Commonwealth clear

authority to order appropriate, timely drought response to affected regions of the state. It enables Massachusetts to implement drought management policy in a proactive manner instead of the ineffective, reactive approach that exists under current law. Specifically, H.898/S.530 provides the Commonwealth with the authority to require water conservation during times of drought. Such water conservation would apply to nonessential water use by all water users within a specified drought region, with an exemption for agriculture and other designated essential water users.

This bill provides much-needed improvements to Massachusetts' drought management policies by giving the Commonwealth the tools required to help ensure the ongoing sustainability of our highly valued water resources, including our drinking water supplies, ponds, streams and other wetlands. Adoption of H.898/S.530 into law will give us the means to prepare our state for the challenges of a climate future that will include longer and more frequent droughts. APCC requests that the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture act swiftly in moving this bill forward in the legislative process.

APCC thanks the chairs and members of the committee for their consideration of this important bill.

Sincerely,



Andrew Gottlieb
Executive Director

cc: Senator Julian Cyr
Senator Susan Moran
Representative Sarah Peake
Representative Timothy Whelan
Representative Kip Diggs
Representative David Vieira
Representative Dylan Fernandes
Representative Steven Xiarhos