

**COMMITTEE ON MDC GOVERNMENT
PUBLIC HEARING**

The Metropolitan District Training Center
125 Maxim Road, Hartford
Monday, February 24, 2020

Present: Commissioners John Avedisian, Avery Buell, Peter Gardow, Denise Hall, Allen Hoffman, Jean Holloway, Byron Lester, Raymond Sweezy, Alvin Taylor and District Chairman William A. DiBella (10)

Also

Present: Scott W. Jellison, Chief Executive Officer
Christopher Stone, Assistant District Counsel
Steve Bonafonte, Assistant District Counsel
John S. Mirtle, District Clerk
Christopher Levesque, Chief Operating Officer
Kelly Shane, Chief Administrative Officer
Sue Negrelli, Director of Engineering
Tom Tyler, Director of Facilities
David Banker, Project Manager
Julie McLaughlin, Communications Administrator
Nick Salemi, Communications Administrator
David Silverstone, Independent Consumer Advocate

PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED REVISIONS TO ORDINANCES

Commissioner Allen Hoffman, acting as chairman, called the public hearing to order at 6:30 PM

Commissioner Hoffman read the hearing procedures and guidelines:

“This is a public hearing to consider the proposed addition of § W1a “WATER USED CHARGE (TREATED WATER)” to the Metropolitan District’s Water Supply Ordinances and § S12x “SPECIAL SEWER SERVICE CHARGE FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SEWERAGE SYSTEM” to the Metropolitan District’s Sewer Ordinances.

This Public Hearing is part of the legal procedure that The Metropolitan District is required to follow regarding the addition of any of its ordinances, as mandated by Special Act 01-3 of the Connecticut General Assembly of 2001.”

“A final decision on this proposed ordinance addition has yet to be made. That decision will ultimately be made by the District Board of The Metropolitan District, and will take into account what is said at this hearing.

“The District Clerk will now read, for the record, the notice of this public hearing and the statement of purpose explaining why these revisions have been proposed.”

The District Clerk read the following statement:

The following hearing notices were published in the Hartford Courant on February 13, 2020 and again on February 20, 2020; and the notice and the complete text of the proposed ordinance addition and revisions was filed, for public inspection, in the office of the town clerk in each municipality that is a member town of The Metropolitan District.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
COMMITTEE ON MDC GOVERNMENT
PROPOSED REVISIONS TO DISTRICT WATER SUPPLY
AND SEWER ORDINANCES
The Metropolitan District
555 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut**

Pursuant to Special Act 01-3, as adopted by the General Assembly of the State of Connecticut, and Section 2-14 of the Charter of The Metropolitan District, The Metropolitan District Committee on MDC Government will hold a public hearing on proposed revisions to The District's Water Supply Ordinances and Sewer Ordinances. The hearing will be held at The Metropolitan District Training Center, 125 Maxim Road, Hartford, Connecticut, on **Monday, February 24th at 6:30 P.M.** Free on-site parking is available and the CT Transit #59 Locust Street bus line provides bus service nearby.

Proposed changes to the following sections of the Water Supply and Sewer Ordinances will be considered:

SEC. W1a WATER USED CHARGE (TREATED WATER)

SEC. S12x SPECIAL SEWER SERVICE CHARGE FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SEWERAGE SYSTEM

The proposed ordinance revisions are available for inspection at the Office of the District Clerk of The Metropolitan District, 555 Main Street, Hartford and www.themdc.org.

All interested parties from The Metropolitan District's member municipalities may appear to be heard.

John S. Mirtle, Esq.
District Clerk

PUBLIC COMMENTS RELATIVE TO AGENDA ITEMS**The following District residents spoke in favor of the proposed ordinance revisions:**

Deborah Bigelow
Shelby Williams of Hartford
Rhonda Leonard of Lume Street, Hartford

The following District residents spoke in opposition to the proposed ordinance revisions:

Anne Gustafson of Prospect Street, Bloomfield
Michele Vannelli of Poquonock Avenue, Windsor
Karen Hatcher of Pheasant Run, Windsor
Patrick Hatcher of Pheasant Run, Windsor
Nadel-Klein of Tariffville Road, Bloomfield
Alicia Charamut of Francis Avenue, Newington
Bradley Klein of Tariffville Road, Bloomfield
Sutareth Rosembaum of Greenfield Street, Hartford
Tollie Miller of Kenmore Road, Bloomfield
Denise Best of Deerfield Avenue, Hartford
Dave Pauluk of Oakwood Road, West Hartford
Lori Brown of Duncaster Road, Bloomfield
Deborah Levine of Old Field Road, West Hartford
Henriette Herzfeld of East Lane, Bloomfield
Paula Jones of Bear Ridge Drive, Bloomfield
Hannah Roditi of Beacon Hill Drive, Bloomfield
Alan Blasensteld of Walter Drive, West Hartford
Bea Powell of Phinly Street Hartford
Steve Harris of Cleveland Avenue, Hartford
Joseph Duffy of Deerfield Road, Bloomfield
Allie McConnell of Gillette Street, West Hartford
Jeff Doolittle of Robin Road, Windsor
Judy Allen of West Hartford
Valerie Rossetti of Bloomfield
Beth Kerrigan of West Hartford
Jen Siskind of Fairview Terrace, South Glastonbury
Mary Pelletier of Elizabeth Street, Hartford
Alex Rodriguez of Abbotsford Avenue, West Hartford

The following residents from outside of the District spoke in opposition to the proposed ordinance revisions:

John Sokolowski of Belleview Avenue, Southington
Kat Fiedler of New Haven
Michelle Rudy of Henderson Street, Bristol
Lisa Candels of East River Road, Barkhamsted
Margaret Minder of Roxbury

The following District Residents attended the public hearing and submitted written opinion in opposition to the proposed ordinance revisions:

Jeff Doolittle of Windsor
Valerie Rossetti of Bloomfield on behalf of Save Our Water CT.
Lorey Cavamavant of West Hartford
Margaret Zorn of West Hartford
Andrew Smith of Bloomfield

Kate Smith of Bloomfield
Mark Roy Swenson
Kelly Sulim of Sherwood Road, West Hartford
Laura Friday of Lawler Place, West Hartford
John Wilkins of Garland Road, West Hartford
Paul Blanch of West Hartford
Mary Pelletier of Elizabeth Street, Hartford

Independent Consumer Advocate David Silverstone submitted the following written comments:

The Independent Consumer Advocate (ICA) submits this statement in opposition to the proposed Economic Development Rate (EDR) which is the subject of the public hearing of February 24, 2020. All of the evidence currently available demonstrates that the EDR will not produce additional revenue for the MDC. In fact, based on the evidence available, the EDR will reduce revenue from the only customer in any position to take advantage of this rate and as a result, increase the revenue which must be raised from other customers.

The ICA agrees that a major driver of the 2020 water rate increase is the decrease in sales. It articulated the reasons for this decrease in its December, 2019 statement regarding the proposed rates for 2020. Further, the ICA supports measures, including rate design, which encourages the prudent use of additional water by existing and new customers which increases water revenue. The current proposal, however, risks existing revenue and if anything, is likely to exacerbate the conditions which led to the 2020 water rate increase.

The current proposal establishes a threshold for a discount at 600,000 gallons a day or 802ccf. This is an increase from the original proposal set by the Revenue Committee of 500,000 gallons a day. (The ICA submitted a statement regarding the original proposal indicating that it put over \$200,000 of revenue at risk based on consumption in the first 11 months of 2019. Shortly thereafter, this new proposal was submitted to the Public Works Committee). Based on the revised numbers, and with consumption through January 2020 now available, this new proposal puts at risk approximately \$115,000 of revenue. That is, if 2020 consumption mirrors 2019 consumption, MDC will collect \$115,000 LESS revenue than it did in 2019, further exacerbating the revenue shortfall.

There is only one customer who comes anywhere close to, or exceeds, the 600,000 gallon threshold. In 2019, that customer exceeded the threshold in 6 of the 12 months of 2019. Importantly, for the last 8 months for which data is available (through January 2020), this customer exceeded the threshold in 7 of those months. Given that the discount for consumption above the threshold amounts to approximately 50% (water rate discount of 20% and Clean Water Project Charge discount of 75% produces a weighted average of approximately 50%), the MDC will lose \$115,000 in revenue if 2020 consumption mirrors 2019.

There seems to be some belief that by giving this discount and putting over \$100,000 of revenue at risk, consumption will increase sufficiently to offset this revenue loss and in fact add additional revenue. The

'bet' is that if MDC gives up \$100,000, it will get this much back and more by enacting this rate proposal. The data indicates that this 'bet' is ill advised.

The customer eligible for the discount has been steadily increasing its consumption, without any discount. In January 2020, for example, it increased its consumption by approximately 50% over its January 2019 consumption—711,000 gallons a day in 2020 as compared to 475,000 gallons a day in 2019. Given that there appears to be some seasonality in consumption by this customer (based on 2019 data), it makes sense, before betting \$115,000, to at least get data from the summer months in 2020 to determine if this level of increase in consumption continues without the discount. For example, if there were an increase in August consumption comparable to the 50% increase in January, the result would be an average consumption of over 1.3 million gallons a day—about the capacity of the currently installed production equipment.

The data that currently exists strongly indicates that this customer's consumption of water is not price sensitive. That is, its consumption is not based on price. Of course, this doesn't mean that other customers are not price sensitive and that there are not rate designs that could encourage prudent, increased water consumption. The data simply indicates that for this customer, price does not appear to affect how much water it uses.

Before betting \$100,000 of revenue that will have to be made up by other customers, the MDC needs some data, some evidence, that the bet will prove worthwhile. The available data for the current proposal indicates just the opposite. The MDC should reject the proposal at this time.

Respectfully Submitted

David Silverstone
Independent Consumer Advocate

The following written comments were received from District residents for inclusion into the public hearing record:

Dear MDC Clerk,

Unfortunately I'll be out of town on Monday, but I'd like to register my opinion about the proposed discounts for Niagara.

NO TO DISCOUNTS! No to the MDC shifting costs and expenses from lucrative businesses like Niagara to residents who have lived here for decades.

The MDC suggests that without the discounts, Niagara will use less water and residents will pay more. I don't buy it. Niagara has invested millions of dollars to bring their plant here. They've already increased the number of lines. Even without discounts, they used more water last year, and it's ridiculous to suggest that without a discount, they'd limit how much water they use or that the MDC would make less money. Using this plant at capacity makes better business sense than building another in the area.

To all those concerned, please reject these discounts. Please don't cheapen one of the greatest assets we have: clean, plentiful water.

Sincerely,
Margo Hennebach
13 Pent Rd
Bloomfield, CT 06002
Previous address: 6 Brewer Dr.
Bloomfield resident for 23 years.

I object to more discounts to Niagra Bottling. Stop this corporate give-away for this already profitable water bottling giant. Stop millions more single-use plastic bottles from entering the environment and protect our watershed from water export in times of drought.

Water is a public trust.

Please include my remarks in the record of the public hearing.

Linda R. Isham
400 Seabury Dr., Apt. 2111
Bloomfield, CT 06002

Public Hearing
2/24/20
MDC Customer Statement in Opposition to the
Proposed Economic Development Rate

This statement is signed by customers of the MDC, who oppose the proposed economic development rates. We believe they won't actually keep rates down, are not fair, and will have an adverse affect on our communities.

Niagara is already expanding and purchasing more water without discounts. Giving breaks based on water they would already be buying results in less revenue for MDC and greater profits for Niagara.

This will not be the windfall the MDC is hoping for.

The very high Clean Water Project charge based on volume of water, may not seem fair to Niagara who buys lots of water that never makes it back into the sewers. But until there's a change in how that rate is calculated for all, it's unfair for Niagara to get special treatment.

You can't discriminate on who you sell water to, and can't control what a customer does with the water they buy. But this rate discriminates by supporting only one customer. A hospital providing a valuable service wouldn't qualify. This is not a uniform rate.

The water bottling industry contributes to our plastic pollution crisis, and their heavy trucks emit harmful CO2 emissions. You may believe you can't sell water to a customer based on their environmental impact, but you don't need to facilitate its expansion.

In a drought, you've assured us the capacity of the reservoirs are great, but that's not the point. When all residents are required to conserve, the MDC has no authority to make Niagara bottle less. The irony of this is that at the very point we all have to conserve, we would be incentivizing Niagara to use more.

We want water rates to reflect the real value of the water we drink. These proposed rates don't do that.

Signatures
MDC Customers Opposed to Proposed
Economic Development Rates
2/24/20

Print Name: Carol Duffy, RSM
Signature: Carol Duffy, RSM
Town: West Hartford

Print Name: Alicia Healey
Signature: Alicia Healey
Town: West Hartford

Print Name: GEORGE LEVINS
Signature: George M Levin
Town: WEST HARTFORD

Print Name: Ann Gustafson
Signature: Ann Gustafson
Town: Bloomfield

Print Name: Grace Hayes
Signature: Grace Hayes
Town: Wethersfield

Signatures
MDC Customers Opposed to Proposed
Economic Development Rates
2/24/20

Print Name: GIRARD HAYES
Signature: [Signature]
Town: WETHERSFIELD

Print Name: Rose Lezak
Signature: Rose Lezak
Town: Bloomfield CT

Print Name: MARVIN JANOW
Signature: [Signature]
Town: Bloomfield CT

Print Name: Louisa Lindberg
Signature: [Signature]
Town: Simsbury, CT

Print Name: Margaret Zorn
Signature: [Signature]
Town: West Hartford

Signatures
MDC Customers Opposed to Proposed
Economic Development Rates
2/24/20

Print Name: I. Scheibner, JE Twigg
 Signature: I. Scheibner / JE Twigg
 Town: Bloomfield CT

I do not accept the rationale for giving high water users such as Niagara a discounted rate. They are already here and purchasing water. Giving them a discount does not make our water rates go down. If anything, as we work to conserve our water usage, lower rates should be given to those who use less water. All should be paying the same rate regarding the Clean Water Project. Please include these comments in the public record.

Nancy L Urban
West Hartford

How many times will you force your customers to fight you for their right to affordable water? It is so disheartening that the MDC is trying to sell off Connecticut's water to a bottling company for the third time. The Metropolitan District was created by the General Assembly in 1929 to provide quality potable water and sewer systems for people and businesses in the Hartford area, not sell our valuable potable water resources to the highest bidder. As a resident of South Windsor and customer of the MDC, I am infuriated that MDC is punishing their customers for decreasing their water consumption, especially in the wake of the 2016 drought. In a time of climate crisis, CT should celebrate and preserve our valuable water resources, not discount them to an out of state company, ship them across the county and charge the people whom the MDC was created to serve, a higher rate than these companies would ever dream of paying. It is WRONG to reward over consumption and make our watersheds more vulnerable during times of drought. The MDC must not allow discounted rates for Niagara Bottling, and refrain from selling public water to any other super user or bottling company in the future.

Megan Macomber
meganmacomber6@gmail.com

Dear J. Mirtle:

Please ensure that this is entered as an objection to providing Niagara Bottling MDC discounts of any kind.

CT MDC citizen/resident taxpayers/ratepayers have seen what are excessive increases in our water usage rates for many years now.

When we first bought our home in Bloomfield, CT in 1990 our quarterly MDC charge was \$45.00. That was quarterly.

We now pay over twice that amount monthly. In all that time there is no change in what we receive, how we receive it and how we interact with the MDC and its product. What has changed to cause such high

rates? Regular line and facility maintenance is required of public utilities, so that is not an excuse to raise rates continually and unconscionably.

Please read the following and act to prevent favoritism to an out of state bottling company for abusing a precious CT resource that citizens and residents use and protect with our taxes and fees and which we don't traffic out of CT.

- **The 20% water discount is bad enough, but the real money is the 75% Clean Water Project (CWP) discount for Niagara.** After the recent 13.5% increase in the water rate, residents and businesses with both MDC water and sewer service pay a combined charge of \$8.07 per ccf of water used, but Niagara would pay only \$4.20 per ccf for usage over 600,000 gallons per day. **Niagara would get about a 50% discount for usage over 600,000 gallons per day. It's unfair.**

- **Water bottling is already a very profitable business and requires no corporate subsidy.** Niagara already has 3 bottling lines. Their production exceeded the threshold requirement for these discounts 6 times in 2019 - without having the discounts. If their 2020 production matches that of 2019, giving Niagara discounts means giving away \$116,000 in revenue. **If Niagara were to expand to 4 bottling lines the value of both water and Clean Water Project discounts could be as much as a \$2.3 million annual corporate giveaway.**

- **With its 3 bottling lines, Niagara can produce 7.8 Million single-use plastic bottles daily, enough to fill three 2-story houses!** While the rest of the world moves away from bottled water with its plastic pollution, mega-bottlers are the centerpiece of the MDC's plan to attract new manufacturing. **This is not the sustainable economy of the future we want for CT.**

Sincerely,

Mr. Mark Ionno
41 Woodland Avenue
Bloomfield, CT 06002-1811

Please include these remarks as part of the record of the MDC public meeting.
Thank you.

As a resident of Bloomfield, I consider it a gross insult that the MDC would once again consider giving a special discount to a large user of MDC's water when it was well argued in the past (when this proposal first surfaced) that the general public would in effect be charged higher rates. Higher rates have come to pass. This gives a clear impression that the general public's increased rates would cover the loss of revenue that should be collected from the largest users.

It is a willful disregard of the public's trust that the MDC is willingly favoring one type of user over another and expecting peter to pay for paul.

Jane R. Low
20 Prospect St
Bloomfield, CT 06002

What on earth is the MDC doing in supporting and granting high volume discounts to the Niagara Bottling plant in Bloomfield?! Where is the vision for our state's future clean water supply, not to mention Bloomfield? Single use plastics bags, straws and other plastics are being banned across the country as they well should be. Plastic pollution is one of our greatest environmental threats so I am astonished to discover that the MDC - once a well-regarded, trusted organization that I had faith would put the public trust ahead of corporate greed is considering an ill-conceived rate discount for Niagara.

I have not forgotten the back-room dealing that allowed Niagara to set up shop in Bloomfield. I am stunned that MDC has sunk this low and isn't at the forefront of more progressive and environmentally sound planning - insisting on reusable glass bottles at a minimum. And what of the impact of water depletion should we suffer a drought? What then? Don't sell out. Don't ignore your best and longest customers - the public.

Robin Sherwood
Bloomfield

I am not in favor of these giveaways.

I could not attend today.

Marcia Ferreira
132 Cherry Hill Drive
NEWINGTON

RE: *Park Watershed comments: Public Hearing on the proposed benefits to Niagara Bottling 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount for monthly usage is over 600,000 gallons/day.*

To the MDC District Clerk,

I reside at 80 Elizabeth Street, in the City of Hartford. Please note I am also a former member of the MDC Citizens Advisory Committee, which was active from 2004 – 2014, as a representative of the Park River Watershed Revitalization Initiative, which evolved into a 501c3 organization: Park Watershed. At the monthly MDC Citizens Advisory Committee, and additional Green Infrastructure subcommittee meetings, I consistently encouraged the MDC to explore innovative, 21st century strategies such as green infrastructure so as to increase resiliency of natural resources throughout the 78 square-mile area of the Park River regional watershed. The operational area of Park Watershed, includes seven of the eight voting member municipalities of The District.

It is disappointing that MDC leadership is once again pushing to provide volume discounts to the privately owned, California-based Niagara Bottled Water Company. You, as representatives of taxpaying citizens throughout your towns are approving the transfer of wealth and water out of our state. I understand that many citizens are very, very upset about the increase in their water bills. Yet frankly, the MDC could do more to help explain why the Clean Water Project has been an important, and to date rather successful (fast-tracked) project. I speak to so many people who forget that they willingly (mindlessly) pay more for monthly cable tv, and/or Netflix, or their mobile phones, or their vacation, or their second home, . . . When I remind disgruntled citizens of the essential services provided by the MDC, and the value of clean water, their negative perspective changes.

Before giving away local wealth and natural resources to the privately owned, California based Niagara – in this open-ended transaction for a volume discount, perhaps you too need step back from the issue of making more money asap, so that you gain perspective on the need and opportunity to better manage our shared, public water resources in the future, especially with respect to the acceleration of climate change, which will make water – and communities that have reliable clean drinking water supplies, an attractive place to live, work and do business.

Park Watershed has often encouraged MDC to explore innovative ways of bringing in new revenue. Enabling the sale of bottled water is not innovative, it is not in the best interest of the MDC taxpayers. While it may

help quell concerns about rising water rates, selling plastic bottles is not sustainable for the District, our State or the planet. Were you aware that there are already five gyres of plastic particles floating in every ocean on this planet? That once pristine island beaches are now covered with plastic trash, and that marine mammals are increasingly dying from having eaten plastic? Three of the five are ~ the size of Texas, which is about the size of France. Were you aware that the State of Washington has moved to restrict water bottling:

“On Monday night the state senate passed a bill that would ban new permits for water bottling operations. SB 6278 states “any use of water for the commercial production of bottled water is deemed to be detrimental to the public welfare and the public interest” and would apply retroactively to new permits filed after 1 January 2019.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/feb/18/bottled-water-ban-washington-state>

Communities are just beginning to understand that plastic water bottles, while addictive, are not sustainable. By giving a volume discount to Niagara Bottling, a California-based privately-owned company, you will be overlooking the opportunity to orient the MDC towards 21st century revenue strategies that improve the delivery of water, as well as water as a natural resource within our communities. For example, how could the MDC make the revenue through the development of better systems of distribution? While drinking fountains seem outdated, increasingly individuals are choosing to carry their own water bottles and thus looking for a place to fill durable, reusable water bottles. Could MDC invest in better distribution? Are there ways that the MDC could generate renewable energy with all the sewage it collects? Of course, The District ought to become a stormwater utility so it could better manage – and charge for stormwater runoff from large parking lots and the rooftops of big-box stores. These new strategies of generating revenue are already being utilized in communities that recognize there is an urgent need to develop regenerative natural resources and community wealth that benefits local quality of life.

I understand that the MDC and business community leaders are probably insisting the MDC desperately needs the revenue – and so you may feel compelled to accept giving a privately-owned California-based company, a 20% water discount, plus a 75% Clean Water Project discount. However, if you do, you will be forcing future generations, perhaps your own children to have to continue to pay extra to support their profits. You will also be allowing Niagara Bottling to pump so enough plastic water bottles to fill the 321' Traveler's Tower within ~ four days. So imagine the Traveler's Tower full of plastic water bottles, multiply 321' tower of plastic by sixty-five, and this is what you will be approving every single year for as long as the private owners of this California-based company want the profits, which will most likely be until, . . . either the transfer of wealth out of our community, and environmental damages, forces others to protect our local natural resources.

The MDC is not a private corporation. The MDC LTCP is funded by rate payers who are residents of the voting member towns, and by state taxpayers. It seems reasonable for the MDC to prioritize open collaboration its voting member towns, municipal staff and citizens, in order to achieve sustainable, regenerative goals for the environmental and the economy that will improve water quality within the District. Park Watershed recommends The District enlist all of the citizens who have come to protest this volume discount give-away to help the MDC find new sources of revenue. I believe that the citizens of The District would be willing to help solve issues surrounding revenue growth, so that you will not have to give away our most precious natural resource to a privately-owned California-based company.

MDC has made significant improvements to water quality within the Park River regional watershed, and the greater Connecticut River. Park Watershed appreciates the MDC for the Clean Water Project, yet businesses that choose to build facilities here ought to be willing to pay the full price, the price that citizens pay. We hope to improve our communications and so our ability to collaborate together to achieve our shared goal of improving water quality in throughout the District, which is located in the Park River regional watershed.

Sincerely,

Mary Rickel Pelletier

Park Watershed

a 501c3 urban-suburban citizen stewardship organization for the Park River regional watershed

I am sorry I could not attend the open meeting. I am writing to register my complaint with MDC about the deal they have given Niagara Bottling. This is a shameful use of an important and valuable PUBLIC resource: our water. You are abusing the public trust by making these deals with private companies. I object.

Tracey Moore
30 Kenwood St,
Bloomfield, CT 06002

Thank you for accepting my public comment in opposition to the outrageously inequitable proposed "Economic Development" rate, which will benefit only Niagara Bottling, LLC, at the expense of the many residential customers who are struggling to pay their MDC bills. MDC residential bills are not affordable for many consumers and, unlike Niagara, they cannot pass on their water rate increases to anyone else.

Why should Niagara, a plastic water bottler, which is an anti-sustainability business, get a 20% water rate discount PLUS a 75% Clean Water Project Charge discount? This could amount to \$2.3 million dollar for Niagara, a business that is already quite profitable, and does not need a discount of any amount in order to stay in business. The Clean Water Project Charge, which is for construction work that is under construction and normally not included in consumers' utility rates, is for a project that is needed and ultimately benefits all customers, including Niagara. If customers are going to be charged in advance of completion of this construction, the cost should be spread equitably among all customers, without a discount for Niagara.

In addition, the proposed discount rate for Niagara is contrary to Connecticut's water conservation efforts. Conservation should reward *lower* water users, and not single out the highest user for a discount.

Climate change is real. Although there is an adequate water supply now, this may change. Extreme weather, including droughts, may affect the MDC service area, as other areas have been affected. Planning ahead is critical. Encouraging the waste of a precious resource makes no sense.

Please, do not approve the so called "Economic Development" rate which would allow Niagara to benefit at the expense of other customers.

Thank you.
Valerie Bryan
180 Beacon St.
Hartford, CT 06105

I do not believe water rates should be discounted by volume. In a time of climate change, when droughts are apt to be more frequent, a permanent policy of water conservation should be in place. Further,

residential drinking water should have a priority over all other uses. No water should be bottled and shipped anywhere.

Thank you for considering my position.

Respectfully,
Bill Nygren
107 Wood Pond Road
West Hartford (postal)
Farmington (tax town)

Dear Mr. Mirtle,
Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony following the MDC public hearing last night.

I learned from MDC staff last night that this discount would mean the water bottling company would use more water, and that the discounts would also bring in more large-volume customers, both of which would eventually help reduce our residential water rates.

I also learned from the Independent Consumer Advocate that the kind of large-volume customer that would receive the discounts is not price sensitive, and that the company is going to use what water it needs. I understood that he looked at last year's water use, and that if the company uses a similar amount of water again this year, the MDC stands to lose revenue if it initiates the discounts.

I left the hearing without a clear understanding of the economic impact of these discounts.

Leaders who want to raise revenue for the MDC need to present a clear, compelling reason for their proposed strategies. Instead, what I left with after the hearing is that you angered your constituents, you set the stage for pitting inner city residents against suburbanites, and you demonstrated a lack of respect for environmental issues.

MDC leadership has an opportunity to work with the people who spoke last night to find a better way to raise revenue. I hope you will take advantage.

I oppose these discounts.

Jane Zande
16 Dorset Road
West Hartford

Please register my comments.

MDC pricing changes should be grounded in a conservation! – rates should be lower for essential needs and higher for non-essential needs. Niagara can use up to 1.8 Million gallons of MDC water/day and produce up to 10 Million single-use plastic water bottles/day. Why give special treatment to a user that extracts that much water and generates that much plastic pollution?

Sincerely,
Jennifer Boyd
52 Wells Road
West Hartford, CT 06107

Subject: MDC's proposed discounts violate the public trust

Dear Clerk Mirtle & MDC Commissioners:

Please ensure that my letter is entered into the record to demonstrate my protest against the current proposed discounts to MDC high-volume users.

I wish to register my very strong opposition to the MDC's latest round of proposed water discounts. The relative benefits and burdens of the system must be equitably distributed among all users to ensure that the system operates in the public interest. I believe that the proposed discounts violate the MDC's public trust insofar as they favor a single entity.

I fully support the following points addressed by Save Our Water CT:

- **It is wrong and misguided to create rates that benefit only one customer and one industry.** No other customer comes close to qualifying for the discounts: not hospitals, farmers, or craft breweries. Most of the water Niagara uses goes straight into plastic bottles, not into the sewers. The Clean Water Project Charge for Niagara would be based on the amount of waste water discharged to the sewer - not on the amount of water used, as it is for everyone else, whether watering gardens or irrigating fields. This is unfair and inequitable.
- **A true "industrial" or "economic development" rate encourages a variety of new development and is structured with a time-limited discount.** These discounts for Niagara can go on forever while other MDC customer rates go up and up.
- **MDC pricing changes should be grounded in a conservation ethic** – rates should be lower for essential needs and higher for non-essential needs. Niagara can use up to 1.8 Million gallons of MDC water/day and produce up to 10 Million single-use plastic water bottles/day. Why give special treatment to a user that extracts that much water and generates significant plastic pollution? **Especially as both Niagara and the MDC refuse to consider regulations limiting water extraction during a drought.**
- **The MDC faces significant financial challenges with declining water consumption, an aging infrastructure, and the Clean Water Project.** It is time to consider other approaches to the MDC's financial challenges as suggested by MDC's Independent Consumer Advocate. **Everyone needs to pay their fair share, and that includes Niagara.**

I expect the representatives to the MDC and MDC staff to act conscientiously for the public good and drop the proposed discounts and move forward in the public interest. Absent that occurring, I urge my legislators and my Town Council to act swiftly to prevent the MDC from implementing the proposed or similar discount plan.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Barbara J. Frey
West Hartford, CT 06107

To the MDC Clerk and Board

I am a resident of Bloomfield and I am unable to attend tonight's hearing. I am requesting that MDC NOT give a discount to Niagara. Thank you very much for your attention to this matter. Please make sure that this email comment is entered into the record of the public hearing.

Patricia Salner
9 Cherry Hills Circle
Bloomfield CT

To: The Metropolitan District Commission, Jmirtle@themdc.com

My name is Milena Frankowska and I am submitting these comments in opposition to the proposed bulk discount rates for Niagara or any other corporation that may seek such discount.

Members of the CT League of Conservation Voters perfectly laid out the arguments why it is unfair to the residents/taxpayers of the Greater Hartford area to allow a corporation to receive a discount on their purchase of public water. Environmental impact of bottled water outweighs the revenue generated by the water sale to Niagara. Climate change is already here and water scarcity may become a real issue for the residents of Connecticut real soon. We should protect this public good, not give it away.

Per Earth911.com half of the Fiji residents do not have access to clean and safe water, while Fiji bottled water company is exporting millions of gallons of it throughout the world. We cannot allow this trend to sprout here. Not to mention the amount of fossil fuels used to transport the water to bottling plants, to produce and transport plastic bottles, and then to distribute bottled water to stores. It is time for the government to promote sustainability, not corporate profitability on the backs of already struggling taxpayers.

Sincerely,
Milena Frankowska
15 Knollwood Rd,
West Hartford, CT 06110

Hello Ms. Mirtle,

Please include my remarks in the record of the public hearing.

I was a Bloomfield resident at the time everything came out all of a sudden about Niagara receiving rights to our water. I was against the entire deal then and spoke at a town council meeting. Afterwards, another town resident told me that those who spoke against the Niagara deal were a bunch of "retarded hippies".

Now, I live in East Hartford, and I am still against giving discounts to mega users of our water. It is shortsighted to be making deals with private companies about access to our water, the water we protect and take care of, that is for the residents of Connecticut.

Why would we be looking to work with a company that is going to add more pollution, also, in the form of plastic bottles?

What's going to happen when we have a disaster and the citizens of Connecticut won't have the same access to water as a private company that is based in California? I firmly believe we need a new vision on how we take care of and use our state's natural resources.

Thank you for your considering my remarks.

Sincerely,
Juliet Kapsis
East Hartford, CT

I oppose volume discounts to Niagara. Reason- To protect community in times of water shortage.

Sincerely,
David Hild.
400 Seabury DR. Apt 4216.
Bloomfield. Ct 06002

Dear Mr. Mirtle,

I am submitting the attached comments for inclusion in the Public Hearing record for the above-referenced water and sewer ordinances. **I oppose the proposed discounts.**

As a citizen of Bloomfield, I am directly affected should you decide to give megabottler **Niagara Bottling a 20% water rate discount a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount whenever monthly usage is over 600,000 gallons/day.** I don't understand why you want to reward a company that doesn't conserve water, overabuses plastic water bottles and contributes to climate change by the 200 or more trucks that travel down Woodland Avenue, Bloomfield everyday dispersing water to other towns and states. It's just not fair and I implore you to listen to the citizens who live here and in our state and respect that water is a public trust and discounted rates should not be given to a select few water bottlers while no one else will qualify for these discounts. Why should the corporations get a hand out while resident rates climb?

With that being said, I submit to you an article written by Dwight Meriam and Alicea Charamut which fully reflects how I feel. I respectfully ask the MDC commission to seriously consider the negative implications and that you **VOTE NO** to new discounts for mega water bottlers.

Sharon J. Mann
1 Adams Road
Bloomfield, CT 06002

Please include the following comments in the public record for the February 24, 2020 public hearing of the Metropolitan District Commission:

I am writing in opposition to the MDC's proposal for high-volume customer discounts for super-users. As a long-time ratepayer to MDC to access our public water, I find it disturbing that the Commission is hanging out a "SALE: Discounts!" sign on this precious resource that we should seek to conserve, especially as we navigate through an era of climatic uncertainty.

I don't recall rates decreasing for residential customers who are encouraged to conserve. It is simply unfair to allow industrial super-users—many of whom are exporting our water in various products—to benefit now and into the future from such discounts.

Tim Wolf
Bloomfield, CT

Date: February 24, 2020

To: John Mirtle, MDC Clerk

From: David M. Mann
Deputy Mayor
Town of Bloomfield

Re: February 24, 2020 Public Hearing on Proposed Revisions to District Water Supply and Sewer Ordinances

Mr. Mirtle:

I am hereby submitting comment and testimony for inclusion in the Public Hearing record for the above referenced water and sewer ordinances.

In particular, I oppose the large volume discount provisions being proposed. I believe these discounts can be considered discriminatory, in as much as there is only one user in the district for which they would apply. (Niagara). As I understand it, the discounts would apply to both water supply and discharge, of which the latter results in a more significant cost reduction for this user. This seems counterproductive, since it results in a loss of income to the District that must be recovered from other users. Ironically, it also punishes those who have been asked to conserve.

Oddly enough, removal of similar discounts for Niagara after about a year in operation, did not deter them from carrying on business as usual. One has to wonder why the MDC is willing to reduce this income source, when they appear to be willing to pay the MDC fees in return for the reliable supply of excellent water. Niagara is a for profit corporation and the cost of water should be a deductible expense as part of their cost of doing business which they can afford.

These discounts are being considered an economic development incentive, but there is no other user in the area that can meet the 600k gpd threshold on a single meter. This suggests that only other water bottlers would be eligible, which is not an appropriate economic development direction for our region. Bottling plants are not the best job generating entities, they generate high daily volumes of heavy truck traffic which, together with plastic bottle production, adds to environmental concerns.

Finally, we do experience droughts from time to time and there should be provisions to curtail delivery to large volume users like water bottlers during these times so that residents, businesses, and the industries we rely on for employment continue to operate.

I have attached a resolution previously passed by the Bloomfield Town Council on November 13, 2018 that opposed large volume discounts. There has been no change in the Council's position since that date.

Sincerely,

David M. Mann
Deputy Mayor
Town of Bloomfield

To the Metropolitan District Commission:

We write from the Collaborative Center for Justice, a faith-based advocacy organization in Hartford. We are sponsored by six Congregations of Women Religious in Connecticut. Protecting human rights and caring for the environment have been two of our priority issues in our education and advocacy work over the last 20 years.

We believe that affordable access to clean water is a human right that should be upheld for all people. We are concerned that providing significant discounts to super-users such as Niagara Bottling would put the human right to water at risk for the community that depends on the same water supply as the one Niagara uses. Providing deep discounts to this bottling company, or others like it, may incentivize the company to extract significant amounts of water from the source, thereby leaving far less water available for residents. This concern would be heightened in times of drought. In last year's legislative session, the Connecticut General Assembly approved the State Water Plan. This plan articulates that water is a public trust. Thus, we urge you to act in a way that protects the right to water for all people in Connecticut, rather than providing greater access to corporations through discounts.

We are also worried that providing such significant discounts to super-users, such as Niagara Bottling, would lead to an increase in rates for the residents in this area. We are particularly concerned about the impact this would have on low-income residents who are already struggling to afford basic needs.

Additionally, we have concerns about the effects that an increase in bottling activity would have on pollution. At a time when plastic pollution is already a significant issue around the state, an increase in the distribution and sale of plastic water bottles is counter to efforts to reduce plastic pollution and the reliance on single-use plastics.

We urge you not to move forward with plans to provide these discounts to super-users. We urge you to take actions to protect the quality and quantity of the water in this watershed area for the affordable use of the residents in Connecticut who depend on it for their survival.

Thank you for your action on this issue of great importance.

Sincerely,
Dwayne David Paul – Director
Rachel Lea Scott, MSW – Associate Director
Rachel Lea Scott, MSW, MATM
Associate Director
Collaborative Center for Justice, Inc.
40 Clifford Street
Hartford, CT 06114

Please include these remarks in the record of the public hearing on MDC's discount for Niagara. I am not able to attend the hearing and testify in person, but want my comments to be included.

I oppose the additional discount for Niagara for many reasons, including the following:

- 1) Nagara does not need the discount - the bottled water industry is already profitable. Niagara's bottled water supports the fossil fuel industry.....plastic bottles are bad for the environment.
- 2) MDC has to pay for the every-increasing cost of replacing and maintaining an aging and vital infrastructure. Providing Niagara discounts means that citizens will have to pay more for their water.
- 3) We don't know when our area will have another drought - we should not be giving away water that we are likely to need when the next drought hits us.

Ellen Castaldini
400 Seabury Drive
Bloomfield, CT 06002

I am a 65 year old woman who lives in Windsor. Already this year MY bill from MDC has increased, now I hear that, once again, there is talk of granting special discounts to ONE company!! How I wish I could feel that there are any PUBLIC officials who care about me and other citizens and aren't influenced by big business. We are going down a dangerous path when we start to give such basic public rights away for money.

Is there still the possibly that in the case of a drought, this company will not be affected by any restrictions that will be put on the public? Can this possibly be any more unfair to the people you are supposed to serving? Don't tell me there's no possibility of drought. Many sections of Connecticut have had restrictions placed on them over the past few years. It is far from not possible; it's happening.

I can only ask that you consider the majority of the people who are served by this commission and not grant special 'rules' for ONE.

Noreen Perreault

Hello,

Please add my comment to the record for the hearing today.

I am strongly against the discounts for Niagara Bottling Co.

I do not want to support that industry, which is in no way useful or helpful to people or the environment.

Thank you,
Alice Cruikshank
Bloomfield

Attached is a PDF of my comments to be included in the record for tonight's (February 24, 2020) public hearing by the Committee on MDC Government Proposed Revisions to District Water Supply and Sewer Ordinances.

Again, I kindly ask that my comments be included in the public record for this hearing.

Please contact me with any questions.

No Niagara's discounts!

Please include this in the record of the hearing.

Bloomfield resident
Bonnie Gaynor

As a taxpayer of West Hartford I oppose MDC's proposal to give volume discounts to Niagara- and their plan to attract more water bottlers to our state.

Residents conserve and pay more while profitable bottlers use CT's Class A water, add millions of plastic bottles to the environment, and refuse to support regulations which would limit their water extraction in a drought.

Stop with the corporate welfare and handouts. I request my remarks be included int the record of the public hearing on February, 24, 2020 at 6:30 PM at MDC's Training Center at 125 Maxim Rd. in Hartford.

Maryanne Barry
West Hartford CT

Linda Pagani
MDC Residential Ratepayer
Bloomfield, Connecticut
February 24, 2020

Comments submitted to the Committee on MDC Government
for the public hearing on February 24, 2020

**In opposition to the Proposed Revisions
to the District's Water Supply Ordinances and Sewer Ordinances**

Mr. Mirtle, Mr. Jellison, and Commissioners,

I oppose the proposed revisions to district water supply and sewer ordinances, Sec. W1a: Water Used Charge (treated water), and Sec. S12x: Special Sewer Service Charge for Capital Improvements to the Sewerage System, respectively.

Large-scale water users, including water bottling companies, do not need financial incentives to profit from our water. They are already making substantial profits without the proposed revised water use and special sewer service charges. Water bottlers in particular are simply repackaging treated water (even with their unnecessary "reverse osmosis" processing step), shipping it out of state, and reaping the financial rewards.

Since the MDC, as CEO Scott Jellison has stated so often, has some of the best water in the country, why is there any need at all to offer a discount to those who want to profit from this water?

To offer treated water and sewer discounts, in perpetuity, to highly profitable corporations in any industry with the ability to pay full price, means that the residential customer loses once again, because we are the ones who must pick up the financial slack so that the MDC can meet its infrastructure costs.

Further, to treat our water supply as a limitless resource that will go on replenishing itself forever flies in the face of current climate science. MDC customers demand that the district start instituting conservation pricing: give financial incentives to those of us who are conserving this precious resource, and levy higher rates on super users. This is a fair and sustainable practice, for the district, for its ratepayers, and for the current and future water supply of the state of Connecticut.

I'm happy to pay my fair share of my water and sewer usage. All I ask is that every other category of user, especially super users, do the same.

Thank you.

Linda Pagani
Bloomfield, CT
MDC residential ratepayer

I heard that the MDC is planning to offer discounted rates to Niagara again. They have tried offering discounts to Niagara twice before. Each time, the MDC retracts the proposal once they hear the public outcry against it. I am writing to oppose this discount and ask the MDC to stop putting Niagara's profits ahead of taxpayers and homeowners like me. The MDC rates keep increasing. Giving discounts to Niagara is a move in the wrong direction, leaving others to pay the costs that Niagara otherwise would have paid. Niagara can afford to pay and many homeowners are struggling with the increases. There is no need to give Niagara a discount; Niagara will keep buying our water and making a steady profit selling it to others. I believe the MDC is very tone deaf in their approach to their rate setting. They need to stop putting this one profitable company's interests ahead of all of the taxpaying public and many other businesses who use MDC water.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Mary Fleischli
West Hartford resident

Dear Mr. Mirtle:

Please submit the attached comments to the record for tonight's public hearing. Thank you.

MDC Board Hearing 2-24-2020

OPPOSE MDC VOLUME DISCOUNTS ON WATER RATES AND CLEAN WATER PROJECT CHARGES!

To the MDC Board:

I once again would like to register my opposition to the MDC proposed high-volume discounts on water rates and on Clean Water Project Charges for customers using over 600,000 gallons of water/day through a single meter. Please see previously submitted comments from 2-3-2020 and 2-10-2020.

1. Of note, the analysis by the Independent Consumer Advocate indicates the proposed discounts are financially ill-advised and based on a "bet" that Niagara will use more water. Unless there have been back-room conversations with the company- or other bottlers- MDC stands to lose revenue, which will be made up by its residential customer base.

2. Have the MDC staff, board, or any of its commissioners had communications with Niagara that imply a commitment to increasing production by opening additional lines? Have there been communications with other water bottling companies? Have the MDC staff, board, or any of its commissioners been in discussion with Metro Hartford Alliance about recruiting additional bottling companies to the MDC service area?

3. Though the MDC commissioners continue to deflect concerns over plastic production, an ever-increasing proportion of its customers do not. Incentivizing only an industry that extracts water from area springs, trucks it in steel semi-trucks to processing, adds municipal water supplies, and produces millions of single-use plastic bottles daily is environmentally unsound. As many of the MDC's member towns become certified as "Sustainable Communities", their commissioners need to reflect those values.

4. The MDC vigorously opposed proposed legislation to limit the shipment of bottled water out of the watershed during drought, to restrict water bottling once residential customers were advised to limit their water use during moderate stages of drought, or to require a renewable permit for water bottlers. Why? If the MDC is so certain that its ample water supplies will never result in drought restrictions or that its safe yield will never approach its limitations, why oppose sensible regulations? MDC lobbyists have decried the potential economic impact of such regulations on a bottling company. There has been no such concern on the effects of drought on streamflow or on agricultural and recreational businesses. MDC's significant lobbying budget would be better used to advocate for increased federal funding of water infrastructure.

5. Incentivizing bottled water only contributes to the downward spiral of MDC tap water use. It is, in effect, a disincentive to drink MDC tap water, rather than an advertisement for some of the best available.

6. It's time to put down the recurrent, multi-year offer to economically support the profits of the water bottling industry as a substitute for in-depth rate structure analysis or true economic development rates. Even at its projected maximum, Niagara's water use will never account for more than a small percentage of MDC's water budget. The water bottling industry is simply NOT the economic panacea for the MDC.

Please re-consider this ill-advised short-term solution to admittedly challenging financial needs.

Valerie Rossetti, Bloomfield, CT

Valerie Rossetti

88 Kenmore Rd
Bloomfield, CT 06002

Comments for Public Hearing
Economic Development Rates
2/24/20

I oppose the proposed Economic Development Rates. I feel they are unfair, won't actually keep rates down, and will have an adverse effect on our communities.

Many have given the calculations about why they won't result in the windfall the MDC hopes for, so I won't repeat them. Instead, I'd like to focus on why these rates would be unfair and have negative effects on our communities.

The very high Clean Water Project Charge, based on the volume of water purchased may not seem fair for Niagara since so much of what they buy never makes it into the sewers. But until the way this rate is calculated changes for all, it is unfair for Niagara to get special treatment.

You may not be able to discriminate about who you sell water to or to control what they use their water for. But these discounts would discriminate by supporting one customer over another. This is not a uniform rate.

The plastic pollution crisis is evident just across the street from the MDC Training Center. It is covered with plastic bags, plastic bottles, and plastic containers. Recycling plastic is no longer the solution we had hoped for, there is just too much plastic. The water bottling industry is notorious for their contribution to our plastic waste crisis.

The trucks leaving Niagara throughout the day and night, are heavy with the weight of water, eating up our roads and highways. The state has a big enough problem maintaining our roads without these trucks adding to the problem and will just add to the cost for CT tax payers. These trucks all emit CO2. The state has set goals to reduce CO2 emissions and have identified that truck traffic is one of the greatest impediments to achieving these goals. The great number of trucks Niagara adds to the pollution in our air is not insignificant.

You may not be able refuse water to a customer based on their environmental impact, but you don't need to facilitate its expansion. You have ensured us that in a drought there is enough water for all because of the great capacity of the reservoirs. But that is not the point. None of us can predict when or how long the next drought will be. When residents are required to conserve water, the MDC has no authority to require Niagara to bottle less water. The irony is that at the same time residents would be required to cut back, Niagara would be incentivized take more.

This past weekend I visited a small business in the Elmwood area of West Hartford where I live. I remember when Goldberg Bagels first opened there. They have the best bagels around. This business has expanded so that during peak times there can be a line extending out the front door. Their space is small, they are ripe for expansion, but there is no special rate that would help them. The proposed Economic Development Rate could better be called a Water Bottling Development Rate.

These proposed discounts set a precedent that would allow the MDC to continue to set rates favoring one customer or one industry over another. Who decides who gets a discount?

I want water rates to reflect the true value of the water we use. These rates don't do that.

Judy Allen
West Hartford, CT

Please register this opinion this evening at the hearing.

We have to be working together as a country to reduce plastic. Bottled water should only be used for places which do not have clean drinking water. Unless and until Niagara assures me that all of their water is being used to provide necessary clean drinking water to those that need it, I will not support any discounts on our MDC water.

Sincerely,
Sally Tittmann
West Hartford, CT

To the Metropolitan District Commission,

Please accept these comments IN OPPOSITION to the proposed bulk discount rates. Residents in all the MDC towns are right to be extremely upset by the new water rate proposal. It is a huge injustice to provide discounts that are designed to apply to only one super-user of our state's publicly-owned waters while residents' rates go up. Bottling water in plastic is contributing to the climate crisis, and should not be part of the MDC's business model as a public utility beholden to the future of ratepayers. Please stop working against a survivable planet.

The Niagara plastic water bottlers will get a 20% water rate discount PLUS a 75% Clean Water Project Charge discount. This could be as much as a **\$2.3 million dollar giveaway to an already highly profitable corporate operation**. No one else qualifies. Meanwhile resident rates climb by 13.5%

- This approach is the opposite of water conservation and reduced impact on our planet. The plastic bottles are widely manufactured from fossil fuels, increase greenhouse gas emissions, and foul our environment.
- Corporate subsidies aimed at plastic water bottlers should not be the centerpiece of MDC's plan to raise money. The state of CT is trying to get away from this failed practice and it certainly does not do any good for ratepayers in this situation.
- MDC is wasting our money by trying to increase water sales. The model should be based on conservation and charge HIGHER rates for super users, particularly those bottling our public resource for resale.
- Discounts to encourage more consumption of water would not lower our rates. Niagara would need to build an additional pipeline and run it at full capacity ---- lines that WE ultimately pay for.
- Exempting Niagara from the Clean Water Project charge ignores the huge investment ratepayers make to keep our public waters clean.
- Plastic water bottling is the wrong use of our precious water resources. It is also counter to our state's waste reduction efforts to sell our local municipal water in order to be packaged in plastic bottles that leach chemicals, pollute our air, land and water, and immediately become our trash problem.

BOTTOM LINE: MDC's independent decisions on water management are failing us. MDC should have their rates overseen by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) just like the private utilities. This would go a long way to treating our water as the public trust resource that it is, not just a corporate asset by MDC.

THE SOLUTION: If the MDC continues to put profits before people and our planet, this will have to be fixed by the state legislature. **Lawmakers created the MDC, and we now call on them to put**

additional oversight on MDCs pricing policies, utility management, and stormwater contamination reduction projects.

Tony Cherolis
Hartford Resident and MDC Rate Payer,
Alden Street

Please add my comments into the official record of this hearing as I am unable to attend in person.

I am opposed to the Volume-based discounts currently being proposed by the MDC for several reasons:

- It rewards consumption instead of conservation. This is especially critical in times of draught. We have received almost no snow this year so I anticipate lower water reserves this summer. Pricing geared to conservation is essential to maintain water for the future.
- Providing such a discount amounts to a corporate welfare. Businesses should be able to be profitable without sweetheart deals. If not, they should close. If anything the residential users should be receiving a discount.
- Bottled water is something we should discourage because of the environmental impact. The plastic bottles do not decompose. It also contributes to climate change by having large trucks moving the water out of our watershed area.
- The claim that large bottlers will reduce residential rates is clearly untrue. Since Niagara has begun bottling, residential costs have increased significantly.

Sincerely,
Lisa Petersen
West Hartford, CT

Dear MDC

I am opposed to giving high users of water special discounts. We must conserve our water resources. Many of us daily do our best to conserve water. It's wrong to reward those who are excessive water consumers. And you shouldn't give corporations special treatment that creates a burden on the rest of your customers.

Thank you.

Patricia Shaskin
East Hartford CT

Dear MDC,

I'm submitting this public comment in strong opposition to the proposed bulk water user discounts. This is complete madness. Niagara Bottling can take a public resource, bottle it up, and sell it back to the public at a mark up and MDC is going to give them a discount to do so? If Niagara Bottling, or any other water company, wants to make money off of the most necessary human resource, they need to find their own water to do so with.

MDC water is a public resource, pure and simple. That means it is equally for all of us, not for one company to profit off of.

At a bare minimum, if MDC is going to continue to allow Niagara to bottle public water. Niagara must pay the exact same amount that residents and other businesses pay. They should not be rewarded for siphoning off massive amounts of a public resource for their own personal gain, that's utter nonsense.

Best,
Alex Williams
Hartford, CT

Please add my disapproval to the record.
The public has already been abused by MDC's grants / gifts to Niagara.
They should pay More, not Less.

Thank you.
John Dunn (MDC Water user)
Windsor, CT

Good morning:

My name is Karen Cook, and I am a resident of Bloomfield, CT. I cannot attend tonight's public hearing but wish to register my extreme opposition to any legislation or financial development that allows mega-bottlers and bulk water consumers discounts. We need to conserve water, not reward those who do not; moreover, we should not be permitting any corporation or entity to put even more single-use plastic bottles into our environment. It is imperative that we act now, however we can, to correct the course of climate change, and we must therefore be responsible about our plastic usage, our water usage, and the ways in which we consume, full stop.

Sincerely,
Karen M. Cook

I'd like to register my opinion in the public record.

I oppose any discounts on water usage for water bottling company Niagara. It should pay the same rates as regular MDC consumers both with respect to the cost of water and the costs/fees of the Clean Water Project.

The very nature of Niagara's work puts millions of single-use plastic bottles into the environment, which is terrible for the planet, and they are highly profitable and in no need of discounts or incentives for them to use even more of our water. Meanwhile, we have families here struggling to pay their bills. Families that have been successful in cutting their water usage should not be penalized for this positive action by helping to spur discounts for heavy users such as Niagara. Rather, they should be praised for helping to conserve a precious public resource.

Sincerely,
Lynn Goldfarb
162 West Ridge Drive
West Hartford, CT 06117-2041

I strongly oppose the discounts that are proposed for the Niagara bottling. They are making lot of plastic and lot of plastic waste, they should instead be imposed with heavy taxes for the plastic that they are putting on the earth.

Akhila Mirza
Civil Engineer
Dam Safety Program
Water Planning & Management Division
Bureau of Water Protection & Land Reuse
Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106-5127
P: 860.424.3695|F: 860.424.4075|E: Akhila.mirza@ct.gov

I am unable to attend the Niagra hearing tonight, but want to register my "vote" against approving this plan to, once again, try to offer discounts to this one and only corporate client large enough to qualify for them. I was against the entire Niagra plan the first time, and stand firmly against this one as well. As a MDC customer for almost 50 years, I have seen our rates continue to escalate to the point now where, we like other MDC customers in the 8 member towns are trying to do our best to conserve. Yet conserving doesn't fit the MDC financial model of using more to maintain lower rates. This is a BAD financial model and needs to be reworked. It just doesn't make sense.

And as far as Niagra is concerned, we shouldn't be shipping our precious water resources out-of-town, creating millions more single use plastic bottles for which recycling is now proving to be more and more difficult, AND providing them a discount for all of this while homeowners continue to see their rates increase disproportionately. It's unfair and the business model is unsustainable.

I recommend the management and Board go back to the drawing board and begin to develop a better business model. I am a retired Cigna Corporate Controller and I'll volunteer to help!! Bottom line, there's got to be a better way and a better plan.

Ken Pouch



February 23, 2020

To: The Metropolitan District Commission, Jmirtle@themdc.com

From: Lori Brown, Executive Director, CT League of Conservation Voters

Re: Proposed Water Rates

Please accept these comments **IN OPPOSITION** to the proposed bulk discount rates. Residents in all the MDC towns are right to be extremely upset by the new water rate proposal. It is a huge injustice to provide discounts that are designed to apply to only one super-user of our state's publicly-owned waters while residents' rates go up.

The Niagara plastic water bottlers will get a 20% water rate discount PLUS a 75% Clean Water Project Charge discount. This could be as much as a \$2.3 million dollar giveaway to an already highly profitable corporate operation.

No one else qualifies. Meanwhile resident rates climb by 13.5%

MDC HAS A POOR BUSINESS MODEL THAT FLIES IN THE FACE OF WATER CONSERVATION EFFORTS IN THE STATE:

- These are not “Economic Development” rates. They only apply to Niagara.
- Corporate subsidies aimed at plastic water bottlers should not be the centerpiece of MDC’s plan to raise money. The state of CT is trying to get away from this failed practice and it certainly does not do any good for ratepayers in this situation.
- MDC is wasting our money by trying to increase water sales. **The model should be based on conservation and charge HIGHER rates for super users.**
- Discounts to encourage more consumption of water would not lower our rates. Niagara would need to build an additional pipeline and run it at full capacity ---- lines that WE ultimately pay for.
- Exempting Niagara from the Clean Water Project charge ignores the huge investment ratepayers make to keep our public waters clean.
- MDC does not take into account a changing climate and the likelihood of drought. Abundance now is no guarantee for the future and is no reason to waste what we have.
- Plastic water bottling is the wrong use of our precious water resources. It is also counter to our state’s waste reduction efforts to sell our local municipal water in order to be packaged in plastic bottles that leach chemicals, pollute our air, land and water, and immediately become our trash problem.

BOTTOM LINE:

MDC’s independent decisions on water management are failing us. MDC should have their **rates overseen by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA)** just like the private utilities.

This would go a long way to treating our water as the public trust resource that it is, not just a corporate asset by MDC.

If the MDC continues to put profits before people, this will have to be fixed by the state Legislature. Lawmakers created the MDC, and we will call on them to put additional oversight on MDCs pricing policies.

CT League of Conservation Voters
553 Farmington Avenue

I regret that I will not be able to attend the public hearing on February 24, 2020. Therefore I would like to submit the following written comments:

I do not agree with the MDC’s plan to give a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount for Niagara Bottling whenever their monthly usage is over 600,000 gallons/day.

We are lucky to have safe tap water here in Bloomfield. We should be encouraging our residents to use reusable, refillable glass, metal, and ceramic water bottles, not single-use, disposable plastic bottles.

Niagara can produce 7.8 Million single-use plastic bottles daily! Most of this plastic ends up in landfills due to the break-down of America’s recycling systems, or even worse, clogs our oceans and waterways.

Water must be maintained as a public trust. In addition, water bottling is already a very profitable business and requires no corporate subsidy.

I urge you to look to the future of a sustainable Connecticut and deny additional discounts to Niagara.

Sincerely,
Carrie Sawtell
20 Barn Hill Road, Bloomfield CT

Date: February 24, 2020
To: John Mirtle, MDC Clerk
jmirtle@themdc.com
From: Paula Jones, 5 Bear Ridge Drive, Bloomfield, CT

Re: February 24, 2020 Public Hearing on Proposed Revisions to District Water Supply and Sewer Ordinances (WATER SUPPLY ORDINANCE §W1a, and SEWER ORDINANCE § S12x)

Mr. Mirtle,

I am submitting this comment for inclusion in the Public Hearing record for the above-referenced water and sewer ordinances. I would like to express my strong opposition to the proposed Water and Sewer Ordinances that are the subject of this Public Hearing. As proposed, these ordinances would be available to only one customer, Niagara Bottling.

These discounts were bad ideas initiated by Niagara in 2015 when they threatened not to locate in an MDC town unless they were given rate relief first on the Clean Water Project (CWP) Charge and then on the water rate. The discounts are still a bad idea for a variety of reasons, including the following:

1. You don't solve revenue shortfall problems by imposing a 13.5% water rate increase on all customers in January, then turn around and approve special water and CWP high-volume discounts to Niagara (and their potential mega-users) 2 months later. Niagara added a third bottling line in 2018/2019 and ramped up production enough to have qualified for these discounts 7 of the last 12 billing periods WITHOUT DISCOUNTS. If the MDC Board votes to approve these discounts, you will just leave money on the table at the expense of all other ratepayers. It's fiscally irresponsible and unfair.

2. The MDC should not be determining economic development policy for its member towns by targeting businesses that consume vast amounts of water through a single meter. Four of eight MDC-member towns (Bloomfield, East Hartford, Hartford, and West Hartford) have achieved certification in the Sustainable CT program. Is attracting industrial water bottlers and other high water-consumption businesses the kind of business Sustainable CT towns want to be known for? Water is a Public Trust resource, and rate structures should be grounded in a conservation ethic.

3. Not to state the obvious, but – single-use plastic is a BIG problem. MDC representatives have claimed that opponents of these discounts really aren't concerned about the water, but about single-use plastic water bottles. Honestly, this argument baffles me. It's BOTH water extraction AND plastic pollution (and a number of other things – like truck traffic). With 3 bottling lines installed, Niagara can already produce 7.8 million single-use bottles daily. I can't think of worse PR for the MDC and for the region than to be catering to and courting industrial water-bottlers. 4. Periodically resurrecting these high-volume discounts for Niagara just keeps the MDC stuck in a business model that clearly isn't working. Consider other rate structures that will provide the MDC sufficient revenue for operations and infrastructure maintenance but still be grounded in a conservation ethic for a sustainable future.

Paula Jones
CC: Byron Lester, Bloomfield MDC Commissioner

I want no discounts for Niagara and I want this to be entered in the public record.

Sylvia Gingras-Baker
400 Seabury Dr. Apt 6220
Bloomfield, Ct. 06002

Date: February 24, 2020

To: John Mirtle, MDC Clerk
jmirtle@themdc.com

From: Kevin Gough
Town Councilor, Bloomfield

Re: February 24, 2020 Public Hearing on Proposed Revisions to District Water Supply and Sewer Ordinances (WATER SUPPLY ORDINANCE § W1a, and SEWER ORDINANCE § S12x)

Mr. Mirtle,

I am submitting this comment for inclusion in the Public Hearing record for the above-referenced water and sewer ordinances.

I oppose the proposed discounts to water rates and the Clean Water Project charge for large users for several reasons:

- Such discounts are contrary to basic conservation principles;
- Such discounts will exacerbate the already severe revenue challenges that the MDC faces;
- Such discounts are discriminatory, as they will be provided to a single user, Niagara Bottling;
- Discounting the Clean Water Project charge is particularly discriminatory, as the proposal is grounded in a “pay what you use” logic that is unavailable to other users required to pay the charge;
- This kind of discount will not drive ‘economic development’ for the region, as they are available only to mega-users, not to most start-up businesses.

I understand the challenges the MDC faces – an aging infrastructure, escalating expenses, and compliance with the EPA consent decree that gave rise to the Clean Water Project. Discounting rates worsens this problem!

Instead of discounts for mega-users, I would advise instead eliminating the MDC’s current uniform rate structure and instituting ‘increasing block rates’ (also known as ‘conservation pricing’). This is a tiered (‘block’) pricing

structure in which rates increase with water usage. The first block accommodates the basic activities of daily living, e.g. sanitation, drinking, cooking, with the per-unit charge of this block kept low. That low rate reflects public ownership of the resource and the human right to clean water; it protects families and seniors on a fixed income from the double-digit rate increases they have experienced recently on their water bill. The next block is charged at a higher rate as water usage increases beyond necessary activities. Commercial enterprises, which generate profit from water usage, pay yet more – especially socially negative ‘industries’ such as water bottlers. This progressive rate structure encourages conservation and shifts the costs toward those profiting most from the infrastructure. Those that use more pay more.

As a member of the Bloomfield Town Council, I proudly voted for the attached unanimously-passed resolution (Minutes of Nov. 13, 2018) opposing water and Clean Water Project discounts to mega-users and supporting movement to a conservation pricing ethic.

Respectfully,

Kevin Gough

FINAL

BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

There was a special meeting of the Bloomfield Town Council held at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, November 13, 2018 in Council Chambers, Bloomfield Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT.

Present were: Mayor Suzette DeBeatham-Brown, Deputy Mayor Rickford Kirton, Councilors David Mann, Kevin Gough, Patrick DeLorenzo, Joseph Merritt, Elizabeth Waterhouse and Kenneth McClary

Also present were: Philip K. Schenck, Jr., Town Manager, Sharron Howe, Assistant to the Town Manager and India M. Rodgers, Clerk of Council

Absent was: Councilor Jennifer Marshall-Nealy

Guest: Joe Laliberte, Program Management Consultant from CDM Smith and John Zinzarella, Chief Financial Officer at the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting began with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRESENTATIONS

Recognition of Volunteers from Jake Brake (Adopt a Spot Program)

Mrs. Sharon Mann, Chair of the Beautification Committee gave a brief description of the Adopt a Spot Program. The Adopt a Spot Program is a town program sponsored by the Department of Public Works and the volunteers from the Bloomfield Beautification Committee. Mrs. Mann recognized several volunteers from Jacobs Vehicle Systems, who adopted the Blue Hills Fire Department on Blue Hills Avenue. (See detailed statement attached).

Recognition of Ms. Nancy Bowden

Mayor DeBeatham-Brown presented a Recognition Certificate to Ms. Nancy Bowden for her countless efforts, compassion and dedication in serving the Bloomfield community. Ms. Bowden embraces the Bloomfield community as a Welcoming Town as a citizen to assisting displaced families from Puerto Rico following Hurricane Maria.

Presentation by the MDC (Update on the Clean Water Project and MDC's Budget)

Mr. Joe Laliberte, Program Management Consultant with CDM Smith presented a brief update on the Clean Water Project. He explained the overall benefits of the Integrated Plan, the schedule and next steps. The primary benefits of Integrated Planning include:

- MDC to prioritize existing infrastructure repair in all 8 Member Towns and more time to control annual spending

FY 18/19-33: Consider and Take Action Regarding a Resolution on Opposing Volume Discounts by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) and Support Conservation Pricing

It was moved by Councilor Mann, seconded by Deputy Manager Kirton and voted unanimously to adopt the attached resolution:



TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD
100 BLOOMFIELD AVENUE
BLOOMFIELD
CONNECTICUT 06002
TEL: 860.894.2540
FAX: 860.894.2599

RESOLUTION

TO OPPOSE VOLUME DISCOUNTS BY THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COMMISSION (MDC) AND SUPPORT CONSERVATION PRICING

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) is charged with being stewards of our (the citizens of Connecticut generally and MDC customers specifically) water resources; and

WHEREAS, the MDC has no charge in its Charter to promote or promulgate "economic development" by instituting discounted rates for high-volume commercial users; and

WHEREAS, discounted or reduced rates for large volume users are inconsistent with the promotion of conservation of Connecticut's irreplaceable natural water resources, which is one of the key recommendations of the Draft State Water Plan; and

WHEREAS, discounted or reduced rates for high-volume users is socially inequitable to residential ratepayers of the MDC, who have, through their property taxes and water bills, subsidized our water infrastructure for years, and therefore should not be subject to higher rates than corporate entities; and

WHEREAS, discounted or reduced rates for the payments to the Clean Water Project are contrary to the settlement reached with the EPA and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) and attempt to unequally burden residents by placing those costs on citizens while discounting them for select corporations, either directly or indirectly (e.g. measuring usage in discriminatory ways – not metering household discharge vs. corporate discharge); and

WHEREAS, discounted or reduced rates for large volume users is targeted to "industries" such as commercial water bottling, which pollute the environment with plastic, generate artificial consumer demand, detract from funding of the public water system, commodify an essential natural resource, and privatize the value of that natural resource (which is exacerbated by discounts and reduced rates, whose gains flow to corporations, not the people); and

WHEREAS, there is as yet no mechanism for mandatory suspension of high-volume commercial water usage during periods of drought until extreme water shortages; and

WHEREAS, the MDC has yet to investigate alternative business models focusing on alternative rate structures and on a lower-tech, expense-reducing business model in order to achieve long-term financial sustainability; and

WHEREAS, climate change represents an as of yet unquantifiable threat to our water supply, potentially imperiling adequate yields for basic human life, agriculture, recreation, the environment, and the economy; and

WHEREAS, Connecticut General Statute Section 22a-15 states that there exists a public trust in all natural resources including water, that "It shall further be the policy of the state to ... manage the basic resources of air, land and water to the end that the state may fulfill its responsibility as trustee of the environment for the present and future generations;" and,

WHEREAS, the Town of Bloomfield, recognizing that water must be maintained and managed in a balanced and responsible way, included a declaration of the need for comprehensive state-wide water planning and regulation in a February 25, 2013 resolution; and

WHEREAS, the Bloomfield Town Council on January 22, 2018 unanimously passed a motion declaring that water should be declared a public trust resource;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Bloomfield hereby states its opposition to any discounting or reduced rates scheme for large volume users of our water; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Bloomfield promotes a "conservation pricing" structure by the MDC, where there is basic low (subsidized) rate for every family up to the amount needed for basic activities of daily living and, from that point on, usage rate INCREASES with the volume of water used, in order to promote conservation, adequately fund the infrastructure, and promote long-term sustainable use of water; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Bloomfield instructs its MDC Representatives to vote against any scheme discounted or reduced rates for high-volume commercial users.

Councilor McClary recommended that this resolution should be referred to subcommittee for further discussion and review.

Councilor Mann noted the considerations for timing of MDC with budget constraints and schedules by the end of the month.

Councilor Merritt stated that the town should contact other towns to inquire about their position.

FY 18/19-34: Consider and Take Action Regarding Tax Abatement for Total Wall Systems

It was moved by Councilor Gough, seconded by Deputy Mayor Kirton and voted unanimously to refer this item to the Finance Subcommittee for further review and recommendation.

I cannot attend the public hearing, but wish to register my opposition to the proposed changes to water rates and Clean Water Project charges for large users through a single meter.

Organizations which use the public water source to make a profit should NOT be subsidized by "regular" or smaller volume users. They should pay the same rates, and be subject to the same water conservation requirements.

I am a resident of Bloomfield, and have copied the MDC Commissioners from my town, to register my opposition to this plan with them.

Maura Riley

I write to urge the MDC not to grant any discounts or rule relaxations to Niagara Bottling, or any other company. I work at saving water and I expect the MDC to do the same. Can you ever expect a resident of CT to save water if you discount it for a mega-bottler? I think not!

Sincerely,
Royal Graves
Wethersfield, CT 06109

Thank you for this opportunity to voice my support for and concern over Residential Customers of the Metropolitan District Commission. Supply of clean drinking water to the homes in the region is the principle mission of MDC.

I object to MDC giving preferential rates, discounts, or any other benefit or encouragement to bottlers such as Niagara, or inducement of any kind to any other bottler of the water resource of our region. That includes Clean Water Charge discounts.

In this time of increasing Climate Crisis planning should consider the possibility of Drought conditions and include a mechanism for interrupting any bottler's access to the water supply so regional needs may be met with reliability. I am aware of CT's Water Plan. I support Time-limited Permitting for any removal of water by commercial water bottlers.

Sincerely,

Martha Kelly
74 Lenox St.
Hartford, CT 06112

Dear Mr. Mirtle, Mr. Jellison and Commissioners,

Please include my remarks in the record of the Public Hearing.

The two main reasons that I oppose the discount for water and sewer rates specific to large-volume users are:

- 1) The cost of maintaining and replacing an aging infrastructure will only increase over time. Offering a discount to those who profit from our water unfairly places the burden on average customers.
- 2) The resource and the average customer are not adequately protected from overuse by the large volume user in the MDC's Water Supply Plan during water supply emergencies (like parts of the state found themselves in Turin last years drought).

Sincerely,

Patricia Barone
700 Bloomfield Avenue
Bloomfield,CT

Dear Attorney Mirtle,

I stand against discounts to Niagara Water. I am against any MDC Charter change which would facilitate such discounts now or in the future.

The Metropolitan District water supply was planned 100 years ago in anticipation of massive population growth in greater Hartford. Short sighted fixes to the MDC's immediate financial problems are not the answer. MDC clearly needs oversight and fresh ideas based on conservation to preserve and manage our water supply into the next hundred years.

Lack of timely, aggressive and creative foresight to address the rapidly increasing vulnerability of drinking water supplies, deteriorating local infrastructure, and world climate instability will not be balanced out by deep discounts to a flourishing company that has already been granted considerable tax relief by the prior Town Council of Bloomfield.

Local supplies of clean, Grade A drinking water for which Connecticut is known are not growing.

I appreciate this opportunity to express my thoughts on this, our precious public trust resource. It is my hope that you and your commissioners give strong weight to the wishes of the MDC rate payers against discounts.

Very truly yours,

Patricia OConnor
West Hartford, CT

Dear Honorable MDC Commissioner,

I strongly oppose a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount for Niagara. All users should have same rate after base charge.

I ask that you protect our watershed and public drinking water source that belongs to all of us. It should never be squandered for huge corporate profit.

Please include my remarks in the record of the public hearing on February 24.

Sincerely,
Mr. Robert Dickinson
400 Seabury Dr
Bloomfield, CT 06002-2668
rldickinson@snet.net

Dear MDC Clerk,

As a Bloomfield resident and voter and as a physician concerned about our health and environment, I would like my following remarks included in the record of the MDC public hearing on February 24, 2020 regarding the proposed discounts for Niagara.

There is no need to give ANY discounts to a profitable business such as Niagara for ANY USE of MDC water, especially for high volume usage. I am against ALL the proposed discounts such as a 20% water rate discount or the 75% clean water project charge discount when Niagara's monthly usage exceeds 600,000 gallons per day. Instead there should be a surcharge for high usage and I suggest a much lower

usage cap of 200,000 gallons per day for the initiation of this surcharge. I also suggest Niagara pay fees for all their plastic pollution and their truck's wear and tear of our roads.

Respectfully, Elizabeth Saria, MD

I oppose the discount provided to the Niagara Corporation for excessive water usage. This merely deplets an already stressed resource on which rates have increased excessively.

Paul Bayliss
400 Seabury Dr. Apt 5173
Bloomfield, CT 06002

Dear sir, in this day and age the last thing we need is more water in bottles. Our environment and our children and grandchildren deserve better thinking. Please think about this before you sell any more water to Niagara.

Florence Grieb, a concerned Bloomfield citizen

From: Michele Vannelli, 1152 Poquonock Ave, Windsor, CT
Re: My remarks for inclusion in the record of the MDC Public Hearing of 2/24/20

Greetings,

Unlike a lot of water municipalities in the US, CT has lost population leaving the rest of us shoring up our state's financial timbers, be it for transportation infrastructures, crumbling foundations, unfunded pensions, just to name a few. Understand, MDC customers have only so many dollars to go around.

Yes, high volume users seek discounts, Niagara is no different. Regarding MDC water, we have an extremely high quality product. Supply and Demand will dictate Niagara's usage. A discount would be nice for them, but turning away sales because they don't get a discount seems highly unlikely. Additionally, I don't believe MDC customers will see a reduction in their rates just because we grant Niagara a discount. Consequently, I say NO, TO DISCOUNTS!

MDC would be better advised to focus their attention away from Niagara discounts in favor of exerting more pressure on their law suit against DEEP for non-payment of services rendered for toxin waste-water clean-up performed for DEEP by MDC.

Thank you

I do not understand how you can raise the rates for your citizen customers, who have obediently been trying to "save water" (what was that all about, if you have so much extra water?) and give a huge rate break to people who are fouling the environment with plastic and deluding people into thinking your excellent water from the tap is inadequate!

Elizabeth Merrow, Bloomfield Resident for sixty four years.
400 Seabury Drive

To the MDC Clerk:

Please include the following remarks in the record of the Feb. 24, 2020 MDC Hearing.

At a time when clean water is at a premium in this country, the MDC offers water of excellent quality. Providing water of high quality comes at a high price. It must be protected; it must be tested; and finally every drop of drinking water sold must be treated.

If Niagara wants clean water to sell, they should willingly pay the full Clean Water Charge for every drop. This charge helps to cover testing and environmental cleanups, thus enabling Niagara to sell water that's free of harmful substances. Costs involving PFAS alone will be a huge expense, so why shouldn't Niagara pay charges to the same extent that all other customers do? I wager that certifiable clean water is enough of an incentive for their expansion and for their continued profit making.

Niagara should also pay an additional surcharge for the environmental harm created by the manufacture and disposal of the plastic bottles and packaging associated with their product.

Bonnie Karkowski
1852 Poquonock Ave
Windsor, CT

Dear MDC water,

Providing discounts to Niagara does not serve the public interest. As a resident, I object to our water resources being given away to private enterprise. This is an unsustainable business that does not serve the public. As a National Geographic Explorer and researcher who studies the impact of plastic pollution globally, I object to the waste and debris inherently associated with the production of bottled water. This industry is a dead end. Please do not give away Connecticut's resources in this way.

Thank you,

--

Dr. Katharine A. Owens
National Geographic Explorer (2019, 2020)
2018-2019 Fulbright Nehru Academic and Professional Excellence Scholar

University of Hartford
Director, University Interdisciplinary Studies
Director, Governor M. Jodi Rell Center for Public Service
Associate Professor Department of Politics, Economics, and International Studies
West Hartford, Connecticut

2/21/2020

to: Mr Mirtle, Clerk of the MDC Board:

Please include my comments in the public record of the February 24 hearing. I plan to be present in person but do not need to speak, as these comments represent ideas that many others will share. I believe that the the 13.5% rate increase in local MDC services is excessive and that the contract proposal endangers public water supplies.

I find that the analysis of discounts to a single customer in Bloomfield (Niagra bottling) is deficient in several respects, per the analysis published last week in the local newspaper, the Messenger.

Would this discount really provide a rate reduction of 10 cents/ccf? MDC is suggesting that the rate would have been lower if Niagara had discounts and was using 1.2 million more gallons of MDC water daily. But for Niagara to use that much more water, they'd need 4 bottling lines up and running at full capacity every day. They don't have 4 lines installed – they have 3, with the 3rd line added in 2018/2019 with no discounts in place.

Water bottling is already a very profitable business and requires no corporate subsidy. The proposed discount is a unnecessary **corporate giveaway**.

Of course, where the real money is is the Clean Water Project (CWP) discount. That discount for Niagara would be about 4 times the water discount. Niagara's water rates would be discounted by 20% but the BIG savings would be in Niagara's CWP charges, which could be lowered by 75%.

How's that? The sweetheart charge is based on actual sewer discharge if water intake exceeds the 600,000 gpd threshold. Niagara trucks up to 75% of their water away and discharges about 25% into the sewer. Since no one else qualifies for this discount, no such rate relief would be afforded farmers irrigating their fields, golf courses watering their greens, or residents tending their lawns. A rate that discriminates based on use (water bottling) is contrary to the MDC charter and unfair to other customers.

The proposed contract does not provide for drought. I see in the Courant every day that we are currently running a rain deficit – and that is with the runoff to streams during the winter months. Conditions will be perilous if this deficit continues into the summer, and water rationing to the public will not be eased by the LACK of rationing to Niagra.

The first stage of drought was triggered in December 2016 at a reservoir level of 75%, but then, fortunately, the rains came. New Britain needed emergency water supplies from the MDC. Residents were advised to take showers instead of baths and municipalities were asked to cut back on watering. **But no mandatory ban on Niagara's operations would have occurred until our major reservoirs were at 10%!** When Groveland, FL attempted to force Niagara to cut its water extraction during their 2009 drought, Niagara sued the municipality and won. Hartford County must avoid such a dilemma by including stronger drought provisions in bulk water contracts to all major users.

Finally, are the MDC's rates really set with their residential customers in mind ? MDC leadership argues that customers are represented by Commissioners (appointed by the governor, legislature, and towns) and that the Commissioners control what the MDC does by voting in the Boardroom. With all due respect to our elected officials and to the Commissioners, these are political appointments and decisions that are made are political. IN addition, I have the impression that the MDC Board appointments often go to ex-mayors, a nice political plum. Investor-owned water companies also have Boards of Directors overseeing corporate governance, but in Connecticut they have additional rate oversight by PURA (Public Utilities Regulatory Authority). some kind of additional rate oversight for the MDC seems to be called for, given the Board's history of superficial resistance to management proposals.

Sincerely,
Edward Savage (electronic signature)
400 Seabury Drive, # 5158
Bloomfield, CT 06002

Dear MDC,

Please do not give the Niagra water bottling company a discount. This act may cause drought, due to an increase in the draining of water resources. Also, the Niagra water bottling company uses plastic water bottles, which contribute to pollution and are killing delicate ecosystems. Additionally, to fill in the money you lose by lowering Niagra prices, you will have to increase our water prices, leading to less money for usage in buying food and paying rent. Finally, your actions will have, as detailed above, major drawbacks on our communities and their residents.

Sincerely,
A concerned citizen (Phineas, 6th grade, Watkinson School, Hartford)

Dear MDC,

We are writing to inform you about our opinion on the proposed water discounts because we will not be able to attend the hearing on Monday evening. We think that you should not give Niagara discounts. The water you are giving Niagara will be sold to people for double or triple the cost that they are buying it for now. Because the rates that Niagara is paying are going down, they will pump more water. Pumping more water can cause a drought.

Thank you for reading our thoughts about this topic.
Sincerely, Olivia, Talia, Amanda, and Zara, 6th graders from Watkinson School, Hartford

Dear MDC,

We have heard about your discounts that you have proposed for Niagara. Please don't follow through with these decisions as it affects our water as well. If you give Niagara a discount, this affects your income, and you will most likely have to charge Connecticut citizens more. Soon, Niagara will start to buy more water because of these discounts, and this will cause a serious drought for Connecticut. I understand that Niagara is a big source of money for you, and you do not want to lose business from them, but it is still not ok to charge more for the people that you have been serving for years. Even though lowering the costs for Niagara might get you more business from them, you may not make enough money, thus making you raise the costs for people in Connecticut. The more water you pump for Niagara, the more they will put in plastic water bottles. Soon we will have so many plastic bottles in the world we won't be able to do anything about them. It will start more pollution and you will be one of the many sources of that.

Sincerely,
Caroline and Kelsey, 6th graders from Watkinson School, Hartford

Hello, MDC! We are sending this important email because we feel our opinion should be heard. As citizens of the Hartford area, we believe that we are being unfairly treated because you are lowering Niagara's water rates. If their rates are lowered, it would allow them to pump too much water and put us in a possible drought. We think all Niagara will be doing is selling the water for more profit. We understand that you want Niagara to keep coming back to you; this does not mean you have to lower their water rates, which will bring ours up. If you let them pump more that means that they will make more plastic water bottles. It will kill the turtles! Therefore, we believe you shouldn't give Niagara lower rates than the rest of us.

Sincerely,
Sam, William, and Kaela
6th graders at Watkinson School, Hartford CT

MDC:

As a resident of Connecticut and part of the MDC water district, I want to express my outrage regarding the proposed discounts to the high water user Niagara Bottling. It is beyond comprehension that during a

time when household water rates have dramatically increased it is even a *possibility* that a mega-user should get a discount. This is totally backwards. We did not want a bottling plant built in the first place. At the very least, they should pay the same rates as the rest of us. Given that they are simply creating more plastic waste, I'd suggest that they should pay a surcharge instead.

Please reconsider this proposal and bring back fairness to residential customers.

Thank you,
Susan Miller
10 Ethan Drive
Windsor, CT 06095

To whom it may concern,

I will not be able to attend the scheduled public meeting to express my feelings in person, so please enter this email into the record.

I understand that the MDC has large bills to pay, and the people that should pay them own the FOR PROFIT companies that profit off of the water they use. Rewarding them with high volume discounts will never be a good business model when it comes to a limited public trust resource like water. Just because it seems like we have limitless water, as the result of a worthy gathering system, IT IS NOT LIMITLESS!!

Every living thing needs this valuable resource. Trying to attract high volume users into the MDC 8-town area through discounts points us all in the wrong direction. While mindful residents try to maximize their use of water, they are paying a premium, while guzzlers know that the more they use, the more they can sell, the more they can make. If the profit margin is high enough for the first 600,000 gallons, it's high enough for the net 600,000 gallons. This fundraising idea is such a short term plan and one not worthy of the trust that the 8-town members have given to the MDC leadership.

The MDC was charged to be STEWARDS, not SELLERS of this public trust resource. We must hold the MDC leadership to this charge and not allow them to offer a discount deal that services one and only one company. Niagara Bottling, or any other bottling company should not benefit the most from selling and relocating the region's water while residents suffer higher costs, many of whom are on fixed incomes, for the basic needs of life.

PLEASE REJECT HIGH VOLUME DISCOUNTS by looking farther into our collective future.

Mark Saunders
13 Pent RD
Bloomfield, CT 06002

As a long-time customer of the MDC I would like to register my dissatisfaction with MDC's proposal to grant Niagara discounts for water usage above any specified amount and reduced rate for sewage. In fact this proposal is counterintuitive – why should high volume users pay less, they should pay more. I water my lawn in the summer. Why shouldn't I pay for usage above an average household or better yet, like Niagara, receive a discount above the average usage? Please consider:

- MDC customers have paid for the development of a world class water treatment facility. Niagara has not.
- MDC customers paid for expansion of water capacity to Bloomfield to support Niagara. Niagara did not.
- MDC stated that our water rates would decrease because of Niagara, they have not. Now MDC is arguing that giving Niagara a discount, our rates would decrease. I think not.

- Other states are proposing that because good water is a dwindling resource companies like Niagara should be restricted or not allowed.
- MDC does not own Connecticut's water supply, the residents of Connecticut own it. For this reason, we need governmental oversight of the board and management of MDC.
- Follow the money. We should investigate how Niagara, as an interested party, is influencing MDC management/board and legislators.

Ralph Zegarelli

Please include the attached in the public record.

Water is a precious natural resource. I recognize that MDC is not specifically charged with managing but that is my understanding of what they should be charged with. When the focus is on not using purchased bottled water and encouraging us to use reusable containers to allow MDC to sell water at a reduced price to a commercial bottler, I consider unconscionable.

I realize that in SEC. 1-2c Water Supply

MDC is charged with:

"The creation, maintenance, extension, improvement, alteration, repair and operation of a water system including the impounding of water both within and without the territorial limits of said district, and the transmission and transportation of the same and the sale and delivery at retail or otherwise by means of a pipe system or otherwise;"

When "the sale and delivery" was included in "SEC. 1-2c" I doubt it was meant for the sale of water to commercial bottlers.

Plastic is a global problem. To discount the cost of water so that more plastic bottles can be filled and sold is counter-productive.

Bette Hardersen
400 Seabury Dr., 3184
Bloomfield CT 06002
bjhardersen@gmail.com

I am a resident of Bloomfield and thus an MDC constituent, living on a very tight fixed income. I care deeply about the environment and the quality and abundance of our water. I do not believe the MDC should cut any special deals for high volume discounts of the nature you are considering in the Niagara case. It goes against the very nature of MDC's charge and responsible stewardship of our shared assets. Further, it encourages the use of bottled water (exactly the same water available from our faucets!) and the expansion of plastic in the environment.

Niagara is a profitable business and does not need, nor should it have, a subsidy. It is our residents who deserve a break, not Niagara, especially after a 13.5% increase in the water rates – which, by the way, has a huge impact on this senior citizen living in a nonprofit retirement community. An inevitable result is an increase in the costs here, which few of us can afford.

I am deeply opposed to this action and will continue to raise my voice against it, by whatever means available and effective.

Rev. Dr. Davida Foy Crabtree
400 Seabury Drive, #4224

Bloomfield, CT 06002
860-306-7524

To Whom It May Concern:

I'm a resident of Windsor and long time customer of The MDC. I oppose any discounts related to commercial water bottling for companies such as Niagara. In fact, I oppose any rates for commercial operators, such as Niagara, lower than what residents pay for water today. Please register this comment for the upcoming meeting.

Matthew Kozloski
449 Rainbow Road
Windsor, CT 06095

I oppose giving Niagara a discount for bottling our public water. Our MDC bills continue to increase and we need to protect our water source for the needs of our citizens.

Thanks
Sharon Conway
200 Westmont
West Hartford CT 06117

To MDC and Commissioners:

It's 2020. The world is in a climate crisis but you are contemplating a discount to Niagara so they can fill more plastic bottles less expensively while your residential consumers pay more. This is the exact wrong direction to be going in.

Not only do we need to reduce plastic waste, we need to save water. Please do the right thing on February 24th. We are watching!

Shai Cassell
Farmington, Ct

Since moving to Bloomfield I've watched my rates go up from around 55.00 a quarter to around 75 monthly. I do not think it is fair or right or for the citizens of Bloomfield and Connecticut to pay for the discounts of a business that sales Bottled water for profit. I say no to the discount proposal of 25 and 75 percent respectively and would request that my opposition be on record.

Best regards
Aimee Chakravarthy

I am writing to register my opposition to the proposal to reduce the cost of water usage to Niagara Bottling. The MDC has already made bad decisions regarding the use of our good water and of using plastic bottles to deliver it.

We, the people, deserve a voice in the use of this water which we have valued, and saved for for our prosperity.

NORMA PELLETIER
275 Steele Rd, West Hartford, CT 06117

I am opposed to giving anyone discounts for using large amounts of water! We're trying to conserve water. Water bottlers also use a huge number of plastic bottles, putting them into our waste and recycling streams: something else we need to reduce.

Discounts for customers using large amounts of water are a lose-lose for Connecticut and our communities. Please rethink this...

Donald Weigt
Bloomfield, CT

I am again writing to you to deny requests related to Niagara bottling.

NO MEANS NO, The commission should be reviewing and addressing new ideas proposed by the new independent consumer representative to the MDC. Please register this negative response to the Niagara related proposal.

Tom Magro,
West Hartford

I oppose the granting of any discount for quantity use by a bottled water company. Several years ago we had some water restrictions due to low rain fall. This is a bad idea.

William D. Putt
51 Waterside Lane
West Hartford, Ct

I cannot attend the February 24th MDC hearing, so please include my comments in the record:

To all MDC members: I was against opening up our Connecticut waters to Niagara Bottling in the first place. I do not believe it is ethical or conversationally responsible to sell our precious waters to a corporation who will take said water and sell it for their own profits to anyone who's willing to pay. I am also against increasing the general availability of plastic bottled water as an environmental hazard.

Now you want to give this corporation a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount, and I am absolutely against this, too! NO MEANS NO!!!! It's time for the MDC to stop cow-towing to this corporate interest and begin supporting the interests of Connecticut citizens.

Lorraine Libby,
Farmington, CT

Corporations should never have privileges not enjoyed by ordinary citizens. Say no to Niagara.

Gretchen and Harald Sandstrom
126 Wintonbury Ave.
Bloomfield, CT 06002

Dear Honorable MDC Commissioner,

I strongly oppose a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount for Niagara.

I ask that you protect our watershed and public drinking water source that belongs to all of us. It should never be squandered for huge corporate profit.

Please include my remarks in the record of the public hearing on February 24.

Sincerely,
Mr. Tom Farrell
8 Valley View Dr
Bloomfield, CT 06002-1632
tmacfarr@comcast.net

Dear Honorable MDC Commissioner,

I strongly oppose a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount for Niagara.

I ask that you protect our watershed and public drinking water source that belongs to all of us. It should never be squandered for huge corporate profit.

Please include my remarks in the record of the public hearing on February 24.

Sincerely,
Ms. Ellen Castaldini
400 Seabury Dr Apt 3121
Bloomfield, CT 06002-2666
ellen.castaldini@gmail.com

For the record I'm am totally against your proposed 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount to Niagara Bottling--and other big volume companies whose monthly usage is over 600,000 gallons/day.

This is a corporate give away and unfair for regular consumers who have difficulty paying your ever increasing water fees and water usage charge. It is also time to stop encouraging single use plastic bottles to protect our environment. It is time to also protect our watersheds from water export in times of droughts that often occur. Vote NO on these corporate discounts!

Since I am away at the time of the upcoming hearing I am submitting my feelings by email and ask that they be made part of the record.

Teresa Burger
174 Overbrook Rd
West Hartford CT 06107

Dear Mr. Mirtle,

I would like to register my strong disapproval to the MDC over the rate discount being offered to the Niagara bottling company.

As a lifelong resident of a community that is serviced by MDC, and a fly fisherman, I am of the opinion that they should pay equally for taking of our limited state resources that your company has been given the public trust to administer in the best public interest.

Jonathan Goldman, DMD

These discounts make me very angry.
Stop contributing to the ubiquitous and dangerous use of plastics!
Niagara should be levied a huge surcharge if anything!

The world doesn't need more plastic, but it does need more water...

Please no more favoritism in expansion of deals for Niagara.
Alice Cruikshank
Bloomfield, CT

MDC has a lot of nerve increasing the cost that citizen consumers pay but offering a discount to this one commercial consumer.

Fredric A Farber
Newington, CT

No discounts for Niagara please put in public hearing records. Nancy from Bloomfield

No Niagara discounts!!
Nancy Hurst
nhurst51@gmail.com

Please! My water bill is insanely high with less usage and you want to give a reseller a better rate?!
Enough already. That is not an environmentally friendly decision.

Diane DiBerardino
East Hartford

I just received an email that the MDC is trying to give a 20% and 75% discount to the Niagara Water Bottle Company. Doesn't the MDC get the message that Ct. citizens do not want these discounts given and wants to stop or at the very least drastically reduce single-use plastic water bottle use? We want to protect our environment and protect our watersheds from unnecessary water export in times of drought! Please listen!

Marie Lavendier
Farmington

I just received an email that the MDC is trying to give a 20% and 75% discount to the Niagara Water Bottle Company. Doesn't the MDC get the message that Ct. citizens do not want these discounts given and wants to stop or at the very least drastically reduce single-use plastic water bottle use? We want to protect

our environment and protect our watersheds from unnecessary water export in times of drought! Please listen! And please register my opinion on the public record.

Thank you-
Marie Lavendier
Farmington

Dear Clerk Mirtle:

Please see my emailed letter, below, that I sent to various individuals at the MDC, at the Connecticut General Assembly, and on the West Hartford Town Council, on Friday, January 31, 2020. Please ensure that my letter is entered into the record to demonstrate my protest against the current proposed discounts to MDC high-volume users. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Dear Commissioners,

I wish to register my very strong opposition to the MDC's latest round of proposed water discounts. *The relative benefits and burdens of the system must be equitably distributed among all users in order to ensure the system is operated in the public interest.* I believe that the proposed discounts violate the MDC's public trust insofar as they favor a single entity.

I wholly agree with the following points as set forth by Save Our Water CT:

- **It's wrong to create rates that benefit only one customer and one industry.** No other customer comes close to qualifying for the discounts: not hospitals, farmers, or craft breweries. Most of the water Niagara uses goes straight into plastic bottles, not into the sewers. The Clean Water Project Charge for Niagara would be based on the amount of waste water discharged to the sewer - not on the amount of water used, like it is for everyone else, whether watering gardens or irrigating fields. That's not fair.
- **A true "industrial" or "economic development" rate encourages a variety of new development and is structured with a time-limited discount.** These discounts for Niagara can go on forever while other MDC customer rates go up and up.
- **MDC pricing changes should be grounded in a conservation ethic** – rates should be lower for essential needs and higher for non-essential needs. Niagara can use up to 1.8 Million gallons of MDC water/day and produce up to 10 Million single-use plastic water bottles/day. Why give special treatment to a user that extracts that much water and generates that much plastic pollution? **Especially as both Niagara and the MDC refuse to consider regulations limiting water extraction during a drought.**
- **The MDC faces significant financial challenges with declining water consumption, an aging infrastructure, and the Clean Water Project.** It's time to consider other approaches to the MDC's financial challenges as suggested by MDC's Independent Consumer Advocate. Everyone needs to pay their fair share.

I expect the representatives to the MDC and MDC staff to drop the proposed discounts and move forward in the public interest. Absent that occurring, I urge my legislators and my Town Council to act swiftly to prevent the MDC from implementing the proposed or a similar discount plan.

Thank you.
Sincerely,
Sara J. Frey

West Hartford, CT 06107

With global warming and an array of other issues facing our environment and economy there can be no sound justification to pursuing this opportunity. This position has been made crystal clear to MDC leadership on two prior occasions and yet MDC appears to not get the message. Stop pushing an issue that has been made painfully clear. No ones mind has changed - stop belaboring the Niagara Bottling option. MDC customers Do Not Want to take part - not for any amount of discount.

Christopher Bohrer
1182 Farmington Avenue
West Hartford, CT 06107

For Public Dissemination

To the Clerk of MDC:

As a resident of CT I am very disappointed that the MDC remains intent on granting the Niagara Bottling Corporation the privilege to purchase our water at a volume discount for corporate distribution and profit.

As you should know, the water in our state is defined as a PUBLIC TRUST.

MDC is charged with protecting our state's water supply and safety, *and ethically regulating our water pricing.*

This malfeasance by MDC has been reported before and it seems it will be reported again and again until ethics and transparency are instilled in the MDC.

Marilyn Allan
Glastonbury CT

Dear MDC:

No discounts on water for Niagara.
Please include my view in the record of the public hearing.

Sincerely,
Myles Connell
Bloomfield, CT

I am unable to attend the hearing on Feb. 24 but please count me as a voice AGAINST the proposed discounts for Niagara Bottling Co. They want a discount for using more water, while we homeowners get another rate increase after our successful conservation efforts to save water? Makes no sense.

Yours truly,
Marie Koller
Newington

Dear MDC:

Water in Connecticut belongs to the PEOPLE OF CONNECTICUT. It is a natural resource MDC is ALLOWED to manage. That privilege can unless your profits and executive salaries and operational efficiency are transparent and within acceptable norms. I am skeptical. How will a Niagara discount benefit the People of CT?

Your customer,
Martin Kluger

I am strongly opposed to Niagara Water Bottling Company being gifted with discount rates.

Sharon Bristol,
17 Calvin Road,
West Hartford, CT 06110

I object to the large users being given a discount. I am a resident of Bloomfield and have been since 1961.

Bette Hardersen
400 Seabury Dr., 3184
Bloomfield CT 06002
bjhardersen@gmail.com

As a resident of Bloomfield CT, a town of the MDC I wish to state **my strong objection to the water usage discount for Niagara.** I don't believe this will solve the MDC 's problem. Secondly, given the state of our environment and climate change, additional millions of plastic bottles to our already polluted Earth is anything but helpful. Also, pollution of our air and deterioration of our roads by increased truck traffic would occur. **The only entity to benefit from this discount is Niagara Bottling Company. I believe this discount is counterproductive** NO to another discount for Niagara!!!

Sincerely,
Nancy Audette,
Bloomfield CT

As a resident of a member town of the MDC I am writing to state my strong objection to the water usage discount. First of all I don't believe this will solve the MDC problem. Secondly, given the state of our environment and climate change, additional millions of plastic bottles to our already polluted Earth is anything but helpful. We have experienced increased draughts, yet Niagara's continues using the same huge amounts of water, while we are expected to conserve. The only entity to benefit from this discount is Niagara Bottling Company. I believe this discount is counterproductive .

Thank you.--
Martha E. Hartle
31 Woodland Street, 11P
Hartford, CT 06105

Hello,

I would like the following comments to be included as remarks for the public record on the hearing on 2/24/2020.

Our water resources are limited and precious. These resources serve many needs of both residents and businesses. However, selling these resources at a discount to Niagara or other large bottlers of water is irresponsible and does not serve the long-term interests of the citizens of this great State of Connecticut.

In the event of a drought, there is no provision to protect and prioritize residential users for what is not only a convenience but literally a requirement for life. Asking residents to conserve water while a large business can bottle our water unabated and ship it out of state is absurd and irresponsible.

This is not simply a hypothetical doomsday scenario, but rather a realistic likely scenario that makes no sense. Why would we put the millions or residents of CT at risk of critical water shortages or inconvenience while a single corporate entity profits.

Please do not provide ANY volume water or sewer discounts for large scale water users like Niagara.

Josh Davidson
Farmington, CT 06032

As a resident of a member town of the MDC I wish to state my strong objection to the water usage discount. First of all I don't believe this will solve the MDC problem. Secondly, given the state of our environment and climate change, adding more millions of plastic bottles to our already polluted Earth is anything but helpful. Adding to this pollution of our air and deterioration of our roads by increased truck traffic by Niagara, the only entity to benefit from this discount, it seems to me that the whole discount is counterproductive.

Thank you,
Carmela Garofalo,
Bloomfield

As a West Hartford MDC customer I am adamantly opposed to the new proposed discount for Niagara and, by the way, your draconian cut in support to Riverfront Recapture. Your business model is flawed and your public relations model a disaster.

I am willing to volunteer my time to help you try to right your sinking ship, but you need to first understand who your customers really are.

Kenneth Pouch
kpouch5@me.com

Dear members of the MDC Board,

I write as a homeowner and 32-year Hartford resident, to register strongest possible objections to the plan to grant corporate pricing to bulk water users with big discounts. This plan is an insult to everyone, because it flies in the face of water conservation efforts across the state.

The idea that, in the face of a really enormous rate hike that has just taken effect, the MDC would want to give mega-bottler Niagara Bottling a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount whenever monthly usage is over 600,000 gallons/day is so galling that it defies characterization, without resort to expletives.

No one else will qualify for the discount, and this corporation will get a hand out even as residential rates climb. Enough! Stop this corporate giveaway for an already profitable water bottling giant! Shame on you for even contemplating this reckless scheme. Your remit is to protect our water supply and deliver it to all

customers in the most efficient and cost-effective manner, not to gouge residents and coddle corporations.

Among the many things that we need instead are: to stop millions more single-use plastic bottles from entering our environment, and to protect our watersheds from water export in times of drought.

respectfully, but only just so, given your really insulting plan in this matter,

Douglas Johnson
152 Freeman Street
Hartford, CT 06114

Dear MDC,

To our friends at the MDC,

I am registering my opposition to ANY discounts to Niagara Bottling or any large volume water user. As a full rate payer I find this situation insulting. I have no options for other water suppliers thus a monopolized customer. Niagara chose to build here and can move elsewhere if they don't like our service. Stop subsidizing big business on the backs of your captive customers who just received an exorbitant 14% rate increase.

Please enter my comments into the record of the meeting on February 24th.

Thank you.
Michael Slamon
109 Kevin Lane
Windsor, CT. 06095

I live at 16 colonial drive north, Bloomfield ct. I am against any discounts. I am against selling our water which should be protected as a vital resource.

Thanks.
Stephen Ohki

My name is Tollie Miller. I am a founding member of Save our Water CT and reside in Bloomfield.

Over the past months, I have heard comments from the MDC saying that those who protest these discount rates to large users are actually 'just concerned about plastic bottles'. This makes me shake my head in dismay. Our concerns are about BOTH incentivizing the sale of a precious natural resource, water, AND the creation of billions more plastic bottles at a time when our oceans and waterways are already becoming choked by them. The fact that so many commissioners do not care about these environmental impacts on the generations to come, including your children and grandchildren, is mind boggling.

But there are others who are taking these issues seriously. On Feb. 17, Washington state senate passed SB 6278, a bill that would ban new permits for water bottling operations. SB 6278 states "any use of water for the commercial production of bottled water is deemed to be detrimental to the public welfare and the public interest". This legislation applies retroactively to new permits filed after January 1, 2019.

Other states that are looking to limit or tax commercial water bottling operations include Maine and Michigan. And local ballot measures have been passed in Oregon and Montana. The tide is turning away

from this industry, especially in those communities, like ours, where water is being extracted to be bottled and sold.

And this is not just water from the MDC sources. Bottles of Niagara water also include fresh spring water. The sources of the spring water being added include Peterborough, NH; Red Hook, NY; Plympton, Mass; and Somers, CT. This one bottling plant in Bloomfield is drawing water from four states to be bottled and sold as a commodity. Adding insult to injury, the spring water is brought to the plant in large container trucks that create wear and tear on the roads, maintained by local taxpayers, not Niagara.

Why can't CT get ahead of the curve of this damaging industry, instead of encouraging its growth? Enacting these discounts will only encourage more water bottling plants to move into Connecticut. Washington State and other states and towns are setting a great example of communities fighting back against the corporate behemoths that are despoiling our environment and commodifying our water. Let us join them and at the very least, turn down these unfair and incentivizing discounts.

Thank you for your attention.

The following written comments received for inclusion in the public hearing record did not indicate whether the commenter is a resident of a District town:

I am appalled for one that the MDC is encouraging the mass production of unnecessary plastic, the opposite of what any intelligent recognizes to make sense for our environment. only in rare cases of emergency do we need bottled water so this is purely a self serving decision by the MDC, an organization one would think would care about the health of the citizens and their environment. Don't snicker, I know it's not true., I absolutely oppose any discounts for Niagra, an irresponsible proposal ethically ,environmentally and financially. There are financial costs that include quality of health, quality of our environment which affects our health and well being. The MDC should be doing the right and responsible thing....look at all of the costs for this irresponsible decision.

Disheartened,
Christina Brown

We must stop buying and using bottled water. There are many other ways to get water that are more efficient and do not contribute to single use plastic waste and subsequently, global warming.

Thank you,
Julia Sherman
Teacher and member of a solid waste committee in my town.

Please MDC,

Do not give a corporate give away to Niagara Bottling Company.

A 20% discount and more?

Residents water bills will rise unnecessarily as a result of this proposal.

Plus, we also HAVE to rethink and stop this single use water bottle habit. It's destroying our water sources- rivers, lakes and oceans - by filling them with bulk plastic and microscopic plastic waste that kills fish and sea life plus humans, eventually.

Stop supporting these polluters and mega corporations that do not take responsibility for, or, who do not address climate change issues and protections of our waters .

Please rethink this and do not give away our precious water to these companies- make them pay full price if you must continue this stupid practice of single use water bottling.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kim Bova
kbova@charter.net

We are opposed to the proposed discounts to Niagara Bottling in Bloomfield. They can afford to pay the cost of water far better than most citizens due to their corporate profits Why are they allowed to bottle in PLASTIC bottles? We should all be doing our share to save the environment. Please rethink this water discount proposal. The water should not be wasted and it belongs to all citizens.

Richard and Claire Dorr

Please do not give a discount to the bottling company and then raise taxpayers water charges.

Thanks,
janetsgro@aim.com

I, and other residents in all the MDC towns are right to be extremely upset by the new water rate proposal. It is a huge injustice to provide discounts that are designed to apply to only one super-user of our state's publicly-owned waters while residents' rates go up.

The Niagara plastic water bottlers will get a 20% water rate discount PLUS a 75% Clean Water Project Charge discount. This could be as much as a \$2.3 million dollar giveaway to an already highly profitable corporate operation.

No one else qualifies. Meanwhile resident rates climb by 13.5%

MDC HAS A POOR BUSINESS MODEL THAT FLIES IN THE FACE OF WATER CONSERVATION EFFORTS IN THE STATE:

These are not "Economic Development" rates. They only apply to Niagara.

Corporate subsidies aimed at plastic water bottlers should not be the centerpiece of MDC's plan to raise money. The state of CT is trying to get away from this failed practice and it certainly does not do any good for ratepayers in this situation.

MDC is wasting our money by trying to increase water sales. The model should be based on conservation and charge HIGHER rates for super users.

Discounts to encourage more consumption of water would not lower our rates. Niagara would need to build an additional pipeline and run it at full capacity ---- lines that WE ultimately pay for.

Exempting Niagara from the Clean Water Project charge ignores the huge investment ratepayers make to keep our public waters clean.

MDC does not take into account a changing climate and the likelihood of drought. Abundance now is no guarantee for the future and is no reason to waste what we have.

Plastic water bottling is the wrong use of our precious water resources. It is also counter to our state's waste reduction efforts to sell our local municipal water in order to be packaged in plastic bottles that leach chemicals, pollute our air, land and water, and immediately become our trash problem.

BOTTOM LINE:

MDC's independent decisions on water management are failing us. MDC should have their rates overseen by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) just like the private utilities. This would go a long way to treating our water as the public trust resource that it is, not just a corporate asset by MDC.

If the MDC continues to put profits before people, this will have to be fixed by the state Legislature. Lawmakers created the MDC, and we will call on them to put additional oversight on MDCs pricing policies.

turgcath@aol.com

I OPPOSE THIS: Niagara Bottling a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount whenever monthly usage is over 600,000 gallons/day.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE OF THIS, AND READ ALOUD TONIGHT.

Louise Axelson
laxelson162@gmail.com

NO WATER AT ANY PRICE FOR NIAGARA!

Wayne Pipke
waynepipke@sbcglobal.net

There is a water crisis throughout the world, and it is affecting the U.S.
The idea of a volume discount for Niagara is absolutely abhorrent!
The last thing our environment needs is more plastic bottles. We depend on you to protect our water supply for those of us who need it for our homes and for our drinking water.

Mlalie Yalanis
myala@sbcglobal.net

I am totally against large corporations getting our taxpayer water before residents.
Maureen Grothaus
billmogrothaus@comcast.net

Please include these comments as part of the public record for this meeting. I do not think MDC should reduce water rates and clean water rates for large water bottlers like Niagara. Bottled water contributes to microplastic pollution, which has now been found in rainwater. It contributes to increased plastic production, and diverts a valuable resource, our water, a public trust, out of the watershed. Niagara and similar bottlers should be paying more for our water and for maintaining the cleanliness of our water, not significantly less.

Please do not pass these reductions, thank you. Please protect our water.

Sincerely
Catherine Noujaim

When the rest of us are trying to conserve precious water and stop polluting our environment with plastics, why would it even be considered to promote the wealth of a company that does the opposite. Niagra as a company, is private, family owned and very wealthy. I work in Bloomfield, live in Windsor and need water to live. So it makes no sense to discount water to a very profitable company, enriching the lives of a few, when my neighbors and I are trying to budget for the rate hikes imposed on us in a very short matter of time.

Think just for a minute, we all need water to survive. We all need to make sure our water is clean and drinkable, and we are the guardians of the precious water source in our environment. PLEASE DO NOT PROMOTE GIVING AWAY A RESOURCE AT DISCOUNT PRICES. IT IS UNETHICAL AND IMMORAL.

Respectfully,
Kelly A. Caruso

Dear MDC Board Members,

First, I want to appreciate you public service. Thank you.

Next, I want to register concern about the discounts being offered to the Niagara Bottling Co. In some ways, the MDC looks like a business, selling a product and trying to live within its budget. But the MDC is more than that; it is a steward of one of our two most precious resources: water (the other being air). Water, in fact, is designated a "public-trust resource" in CT statute and in the State Water Plan.

There have been no studies of the impact on our underground sources of water with Niagara exporting millions upon millions of gallons out of the watershed. Nor, in my view, has there be proper consideration given to the neighboring non-MDC towns. What happens if we are contracted to sell to Niagara while our water-poor neighbors are going without. Is that fair?

Please include these remarks in the record of the public hearing on February 24, 2020, which I am unable to attend.

Blessings,
Guthrie Sayen

Shame on you for giving a corporate handout to Niagara Bottling at the expense of residential customers.

Morven Barwick
morbarwick@gmail.com

Hello,

I am against offering the 20% water discount and the 75% Clean Water Project discount for Niagara. When one group is offered a discount, the rest of the group has to subsidize them -- this is totally unfair and unacceptable. We do not need more water bottling and we certainly do not need to support them -- they are a profitable business.

Please include my remarks in the record of the public hearing today, February 24, 2020.

Wendy Feer
wmacfeer@gmail.com

Commissioners,

I am not interested in supporting exploitation of our shared natural resource to benefit this international corporation! The use charges you are proposing are a disadvantage for me, an ordinary citizen, and I oppose it.

Susan Olson

Hello,

I would like to provide comments for the MDC Hearing later today on bulk water use discounts. The MDC should be raising rates for high water usage, not lowering them. Rates for residents, who need the water for basic needs, are going up 13.5% while you are giving a discount to large users, which use water for profit. This is absolutely unacceptable and goes against everything we know about reducing water usage.

Please do not initiate these changes, as it gives incentive to large users to use even more water. Thank you!

Best,
David Beers
860-966-1406
david.beers@outlook.com

MDC should not be looking to subsidize Niagara Bottling @ the expense of resident users. We need to stop millions more single use plastic bottles from entering our environment and to protect our water sheds from export in times of drought.

maryellenweiner@aol.com

J. Mirtle, MDC,

I would like to go on record as being **OPPOSED** to giving Niagara discounts and increasing MDC customers' rates. Our **consumer rates are extraordinarily high** and it is **WE WHO NEED A DECREASE IN RATES**. Our rates have been raised and raised again, until they have skyrocketed . They are far too high now. You can't continue in this crippling pattern.

Pass any discounts on to your CUSTOMERS, not another greedy corporate profiteer.

Thank you.
Gloria Long

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in opposition to the proposal to provide volume-based discounted water and Clean Water Project rates for Niagara Bottling. Water bottling is a seasonal business, peaking largely in the summer. Based on consumption in 2019, even with a fourth line, Niagara would only use all of its authorized 1.8 million GPD in June, July, and August — just when our water supply and stream flows are stressed. The state of Connecticut recognizes our precious water as a public trust resource in statute. These proposed discounts aid and abet sending our water to other states. Niagara presently admits trucking water about 150 miles on average. One corporation that makes profit from our precious, limited, high-quality drinking water is being offered a sweetheart deal. The burden of paying full price for the important and ever-increasing costs of protecting water quality, maintaining and replacing aging infrastructure, and taking away and treating our wastewater so that it can be put back into the waters that we rely on for recreation as well as economic development falls on every other MDC customer. If the MDC is going to offer an economic development rate or devise a variable rate structure, it should not be volume-based. And efforts to attract large volume users should be matched by efforts to protect existing customers and our natural resource so when you turn on the tap, you will have water — and will not need to buy it in a plastic bottle.

Thank you.
Su-Lin Carbonelli

Please accept these comments **IN OPPOSITION** to the proposed bulk discount rates. Residents in all the MDC towns are right to be extremely upset by the new water rate proposal. It is a huge injustice to provide discounts that are designed to apply to only one super-user of our state's publicly-owned waters while residents' rates go up.

The Niagara plastic water bottlers will get a 20% water rate discount PLUS a 75% Clean Water Project Charge discount. This could be as much as a \$2.3 million dollar giveaway to an already highly profitable corporate operation.

No one else qualifies. Meanwhile resident rates climb by 13.5%

Myra Aronow
myraaronow@aol.com

Good morning,

As a long time Connecticut resident,

I'm disgusted and in shock at how little do you care about the state's future.
Please stop giving our water to Niagara now. Please think of your children and grandchildren's future.
I hope you make a responsible decision and please leave this email in the record.

Thank you,
Angela M. Epstein

The 20% water discount is bad enough, but where the real money is – and what the MDC avoids talking about – is the 75% Clean Water Project (CWP) discount for Niagara. After the recent 13.5% increase in the water rate, residents and businesses with both MDC water and sewer service pay a combined charge of \$8.07 per ccf (100 cubic feet) of water used, but Niagara would pay only \$4.20 per ccf for usage over 600,000 gallons per day. Niagara would get about a 50% discount for usage over 600,000 gallons per day. **It's unfair.** Niagara already has 3 bottling lines. Their production exceeded the threshold requirement for these discounts 6 times in 2019 - without having the discounts. If their 2020 production matches that of 2019, giving Niagara discounts just means the MDC giving away \$116,000 in revenue. If Niagara were to expand to 4 bottling lines the value of both water and Clean Water Project discounts could be as much as a \$2.3 million annual corporate giveaway. Water bottling is already a very profitable business and requires no corporate subsidy.

With its 3 bottling lines, Niagara can produce 7.8 Million single-use plastic bottles daily, enough to fill three 2-story houses. While the rest of the world moves away from bottled water with its plastic pollution, mega-bottlers are the centerpiece of the MDC's plan to attract new manufacturing. This is not the sustainable economy of the future we want for CT.

What a travesty . Shameful . I don't buy bottled water and I would never buy Niagara. I told Geisslers I won't shop there if they continue to carry Niagara water. I'm sure my custom of \$100 a week doesn't effect their bottom line but I vote with my dollars.

Laurah Lennon
lbl626@att.net

-
- **Water bottling is already a very profitable business and requires no corporate subsidy.** Niagara already has 3 bottling lines. Their production exceeded the threshold requirement for these discounts 6 times in 2019 - without having the discounts. If their 2020 production matches that of 2019, giving Niagara discounts means giving away \$116,000 in revenue.
 - **If Niagara were to expand to 4 bottling lines the value of both water and Clean Water Project discounts could be as much as a \$2.3 million annual corporate giveaway.**
 - **With its 3 bottling lines, Niagara can produce 7.8 Million single-use plastic bottles daily, enough to fill three 2-story houses!** While the rest of the world moves away from bottled water with its plastic pollution, mega-bottlers are the centerpiece of the MDC's plan to attract new manufacturing.

This is not the sustainable economy of the future we want for CT

Jean de Smet

To whom it may concern:

As I will not be able to attend the meeting on 2/24/2020, I wish to state for the record that the MDC should not be selling our water supply to bottling companies - especially at a steep discount.

Water truly is life - for plants, animals, and humans. Our water tables and aquifers are sensitive systems that are already under duress from the volume used by our state's residents and also by pollution. Our potable water needs to be protected and preserved. At a time when climate change, pollution, and droughts are at the top of the news headlines and places in the world are literally running out of drinking water, it is urgent to conserve the water we have.

Additionally, bottled water is overpriced, underregulated, and a great contributor to pollution both from shipping and from plastic waste. Bottling companies are wiping out water supplies across the nation, in some cases destroying lakes, ponds, and aquatic life.

I understand that income and profit are goals of business. I also understand that water costs are high. I do not see allowing bottling companies to drain away and bottle our water supply as an even remote answer to the issue.

Frankly, I am not just against giving bottling companies a discount but also against allowing them carte blanche to literally drain away the waters of life from our state.

Suzi Singleton

Hello,

I'd like to express my concern for the MDC's offer to Niagara to discount the water they withdraw for their bottling company. There are already so many things wrong with this business agreement, so to offer a discount is even more offensive.

The business of single-use plastics is only the beginning of the problem; I also condemn the trucking of the water far and wide-something that does nothing to help our foul air quality in the state and immediate region. Of course the withdrawing of our water supply is just as much of a concern as we are experiencing more and more problems year on year with climate change and risks of drought conditions.

Please make the right decision for Connecticut residents and not for the corporation that is operating in contrast to what business should be doing as we enter an unprecedented era of climate change.

Stephanie Bahramian

Double digit inflation year after year is unfair. Why doesn't the total collective population of MDC customers get a discount for total usage vs. ONE Major Corporation (Niagara Bottling)? That's 50 Million gallons vs. 0.6 Million gallons per day. Another corporate handout that is discriminatory.

Mike Urban
urbanradio@icloud.com

There should be no discounts given to Niagara Bottling because all the plastic bottles are bad for the environment and Niagara is making enough money so they should not need a discount.

Very truly yours,
Ursula Korzenik

A discount for high volume use of water by a profit-making business is unfair to regular customers who are paying full price. This is a publicly owned resource. The public should not have to [in effect] pay more than a business for its use. Please do not approve this discount to Niagra.

Thank you,
Tom Crider

I am very disturbed and disgusted to think that the MDC would consider any discount for Niagara, especially the CWP discount. Also, this world does not need or want any more single use plastic bottles. PLEASE choose the high road here and abandon any discounts and NO MORE SINGLE USE PLASTIC BOTTLES, produced by Niagara or another business. This is our planet at stake.

Ellen Guertin
elleng715@gmail.com

To Whom It May Concern

I am deeply opposed to our continued support of single use plastic bottles. The environmental disaster created by these inevitably discarded containers is unconscionable. We will not develop options without prevention of large water companies getting easy access to our water supplies. While consumers must become much more responsible and avoid purchasing single use bottles, states must put pressure on the industry to come up with alternatives. No discounts for companies that produce environmental pollutants! Actually, they should pay environmental penalty taxes!

Debra Hultgren

Let's hear more about this sweet-heart deal - who profits from it? Certainly not the people of Connecticut.

William Fensterer

Giving mega-bottler, Niagara Bottling a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount whenever monthly usage is over 600,000 gallons/day is absurd.

Water is a limited resource e.g. FINITE. If anything, they should pay a PREMIUM for using so much water. Additionally, there should be a CAP ON THE AMOUNT THEY CAN DRAW ON THE AQUIFER. PLEASE VOTE AGAINST THE DISCOUNT AND PUT LIMITS IN PLACE.

Keith CRUDGINGTON
krcrudgington@gmail.com

I am very much against MDC selling our water to a bottling company discount or other wise. Please protect us citizens against this abuse!

Cordially
Colleen Schultz

There is no reason compelling enough to have citizens support corporations draining their aquifer and introducing more plastic bottles into the environment.
As the water table lowers, municipal water will filter out the impurities and add chlorine.

Do not promote these degradations to the Environment and populace you are supposed to be mindful of.

Jeremy Frost

Scott Jellison,

We all know why you are pushing forward with this sweetheart deal for Niagara.

It feels good to get your back scratched right? I do your deal and you do mine just like at the Country Club. Well this is one Country Club where we are all members. The rest of the pack can smell this proposal from the 9th green and it smells like crap to us.

I assume that you are old enough to know when no means no. In fact, if you were dating you would be in jail by now.

Don't EVER think you will get away with this plan EVER! We have the numbers and the power is in the numbers, not in the board room.

Greg Banks

To whom it may concern:

On Monday the 24 of February is the public hearing about the discount to Niagara bottling company. I can't attend but here is my vote.

NO discounts!!! The CT waters belongs to the people living in CT.

Sincerely,
Barbara Arian

I'm voicing my opinion to stop providing discounts to Niagara while increasing individual rates. My water bill per month is more than what it was per quarter before this transaction. It's not fair to burden the hard working families of West Hartford for selling our water. If anything, we should be seeing a decrease because you are selling water for a profit.

Attention MDC Clerk,

Please accept this electronic mail message as my testimony for the February 24, 2020 MDC Public Hearing. I ask that my message be included in the public record. I am unable to attend the meeting. I am a home owner, voter and tax payer in West Hartford, Connecticut. I strongly oppose any water rate discount and Clean Water Project charge discount to any commercial or retail water consumer. I believe that no entity should be permitted to pay less per gallon for water than does the least financially advantaged customer or the lowest volume customer. Water conservation should be rewarded and entities marketing or promoting use of plastic containers should be financially penalized.

I specifically oppose awarding discounted rates or discounted charges to Niagara Bottling or its subsidiaries, parent companies, affiliates or partners, regardless of usage volume.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Susan M. Severo

No discounts for big water users!

Katherine Wilson
klauderwilson@gmail.com

I ask that my remarks be included in the record of the public hearing. I do not support the discount proposal to Niagra.

Kind regards,
Kathryn

p.s. Have the people at MDC making the decisions about this been out the the Niagara Bottling site to see the disruption of the land and nature?

Nancy Audette
naudettersm@gmail.com

Hello, I am writing to you regarding a few items of concern. One is to say that my water bill has been very high and I want to understand why Niagara gets a discount while we all have to tow the line. Secondly, we had a very dry winter with little snow, and I can imagine that it will be a rough summer in regards to needing to be conservative with water use. It does not seem wise at all for the mdc to give away are very precious water supply. And why at a discount at that?!! Please stop this practice, and your future plan to sell even more water at even more of a discount. Can you please call or email me to explain.

Thank you so much for your time.
Lisa Campo

I am opposed to MDC's give-away for an already-profitable Nestle. My water bill has risen dramatically over the past few years. If anything, Nestle should be paying MDC for any capital improvements to the water systems. We also need to prevent millions more single-use plastic bottles from entering our environment and to protect our watersheds from water export in times of drought. **NO MEANS NO!**

JAMES GILBERT
meg0616@aol.com

Stop supporting the unjust water bottle industry at the expense of free water for all; afterall water is a human right!

Ann McGovern

My wife and I are both chronically ill, so we cannot make the hearing tonight. However, moth she and I agree that the commercial water companies should not get any discounts for water usage. It's high time for all levels of government work for every actual person in all our best interests, not just the interests of a privileged few. So we say NO to any water discounts.

Thank You,
Thomas T. Grant and Christina C. Campbell

Hello MDC

I am respectfully writing to you about the discount you are proposing for Niagara.

I think our main goal as people should be to conserve water, not give discounts for using a lot.

We also shouldn't be supporting a plastic water bottle company. We should be moving away from using plastic.

Our oceans and landfills and streets are filled with plastic and a lot of it gets burned into the atmosphere harming many people's respiratory. It's also harming wildlife and getting into the fish we eat.

As a water company, from an environmental perspective, your concerns should be to to conserve our precious resource of water, look how to provide it sustainably (reusable water bottles not plastic!), and using water as energy.

A lot of people struggle day to day to pay bills. We shouldn't be charging residential homes more than companies for their own water. Please keep those who are struggling in your hearts and minds.

Thank you very much and have a blessed day.
Kelly O'Brien

To: The Metropolitan District Commission

From: Xander Bayanilla, Greater Hartford Environmental Coalition

Please accept these comments **IN OPPOSITION** to the proposed bulk discount rates. Residents in all the MDC towns are right to be extremely upset by the new water rate proposal. It is a huge injustice to provide discounts that are designed to apply to only one super-user of our state's publicly-owned waters while residents' rates go up.

The Niagara plastic water bottlers will get a 20% water rate discount PLUS a 75% Clean Water Project Charge discount. This could be as much as a \$2.3 million dollar giveaway to an already highly profitable corporate operation.

No one else qualifies. Meanwhile, resident rates climb by 13.5%

MDC HAS A POOR BUSINESS MODEL THAT FLIES IN THE FACE OF WATER CONSERVATION EFFORTS IN THE STATE:

- These are not "Economic Development" rates. They only apply to Niagara.
- Corporate subsidies aimed at plastic water bottlers should not be the centerpiece of MDC's plan to raise money. The state of CT is trying to get away from this failed practice and it certainly does not do any good for ratepayers in this situation.
- MDC is wasting our money by trying to increase water sales. **The model should be based on conservation and charge HIGHER rates for super users.**
- Discounts to encourage more consumption of water would not lower our rates. Niagara would need to build an additional pipeline and run it at full capacity ---- lines that WE ultimately pay for.
- Exempting Niagara from the Clean Water Project charge ignores the huge investment ratepayers make to keep our public waters clean.

- MDC does not take into account a changing climate and the likelihood of drought. Abundance now is no guarantee for the future and is no reason to waste what we have.
- Plastic water bottling is the wrong use of our precious water resources. It is also counter to our state's waste reduction efforts to sell our local municipal water in order to be packaged in plastic bottles that leach chemicals, pollute our air, land and water, and immediately become our trash problem.

BOTTOM LINE:

MDC's independent decisions on water management are failing us. MDC should have their **rates overseen by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA)** just like the private utilities. This would go a long way to treating our water as the public trust resource that it is, not just a corporate asset by MDC.

If the MDC continues to put profits before people, this will have to be fixed by the state Legislature. Lawmakers created the MDC, and we will call on them to put additional oversight on MDCs pricing policies.

Sincerely,
Xander Bayanilla
President
Greater Hartford Environmental Coalition

The following written comments were received for inclusion into the public hearing record from commenters that live outside the District's service area:

I respectfully urge the Metropolitan District Commission to reconsider the bulk discount water rate proposal. Giving Niagara plastic water bottlers a discount while residents rates increase is simply an injustice. Our state's publicly owned waters are a precious resource for our residents, not a corporate asset to be exploited.

As our world struggles with plastic pollution, and our state demands municipalities meet waste reduction goals, the MDC proposes support of an increase in the production of single use plastic water bottles. This is not a logical choice. Connecticut's goal is less plastic waste pollution. To meet our goals, we must discourage bottled water and the companies that produce it.

Conservation and the well-being of our residents must be the highest of priorities, not corporate profits. I strongly oppose the proposed bulk discount rates.

Sincerely,
Terri Cain
161 Three Corners Rd
Guilford, CT 06437

I am against the special rates for Niagara Bottling Company proposed by the MDC. I have seen what oland Springs in Maine (my summer home) and Zephrahills in Florida (my winter home), both Nestle oreign corporations, have done to the Maine and Florida water supplies.

Marilyn Nystrom

I am opposed to MDC giving any discounts on water usage or other benefits for Niagara water.

Iain Sorrell
551 Deercliff Rd
Avon CT 06001

Dear Sir:

I understand that once again the MDC is preparing to offer discounts to Niagara. I am and will always be against discounts of any size to any large users such as Niagara. Please add my email into the record.

Thank you.

Ernest Pitti
Bristol, Ct

How many times do you have to hear the word NO before you can understand what it means?
If you were dating you would probably be arrested by now.

You Will Not violate the public trust by giving a sweet heart deal to Niagara one of the richest multi national companies in the world and one of the worst polluters in the world with billions of plastic bottles.

The water upon this earth belongs to the citizens of this earth and is NOT FOR SALE so that a few hundred rich people can become richer.

If you want a fight then you better get ready to take off your gloves because we ain't showing any mercy.

Gregory Banks
Simsbury, CT

Dear MDC:

I am emailing to advise you that this is not acceptable.

Where do you stop? When do you stop?

600K gallons/day. Really?

How are you protecting our watersheds from water export in times of drought?

You are contributing to millions of single-use plastic bottles also corrupting our country - United States.

I, for one, object to what you are doing. In the name of what? Profits? Doesn't sound like it. Corporate give away? Sounds like it! Why? Please explain why!

This is unacceptable to so many!!!!

NO MEANS NO!
Best, Lori

"The Greatest Compliment I Can Receive Is YOUR Referral!"

LORI MACGOWAN, Let Me Be Your Key To a Successful Real Estate Experience!

2018 International Sterling Society

GRI, AREP, ASP, Notary Public

2012-2020 Five Star Real Estate Agent/Connecticut Magazine

Licensed in CT - Res. #0420611

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage-License #REB0788195

290 West Main Street

Avon, CT 06001

I am sick and tired of selling our natural resources to for-profit companies! Especially in the plastic bottles that are polluting Mother Earth! We have to be courageous in our decision making for the health of our citizens and environment.

Donna Bronwell, Chair of Killingly Conservation Commission
699 Bailey Hill Road, East Killingly, CT 06243 860-779-1164

I am against the discounted water plan promoted by the MDC. It only helps Niagra, and will only add to pollution from plastic bottles.

Carolyn Flint,
Granby

Dear Honorable MDC Commissioner,

I strongly oppose a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount for Niagara.

I ask that you protect our watershed and public drinking water source that belongs to all of us. It should never be squandered for huge corporate profit.

Please include my remarks in the record of the public hearing on February 24.

Sincerely,
Mr. Kent McCord
135 Hungary Rd Granby, CT 06035-1816
kentrmccord@gmail.com

Dear Honorable MDC Commissioner,

I strongly oppose a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount for Niagara.

I ask that you protect our watershed and public drinking water source that belongs to all of us. It should never be squandered for huge corporate profit.

Please include my remarks in the record of the public hearing on February 24.

Sincerely,

Ms Patricia Rasch
24 Elm Rd Cromwell, CT 06416-2146
pat_rasch@mac.com

Dear Honorable MDC Commissioner,

As a concerned citizen, I am outraged that you are proposing a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount for Niagara.

Your obligation is to protect our source for public drinking water, not abandon it for corporate profits.

Please include my remarks in the record of the public hearing on February 24.

Sincerely,
Mr. Stephen V. Kobasa
46 Hobart St New Haven, CT 06511-4033
stephen.kobasa@gmail.com

Dear Honorable MDC Commissioner,

I strongly oppose a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount for Niagara.

I ask that you protect our watershed and public drinking water source that belongs to all of us. It should never be squandered for huge corporate profit.

Please include my remarks in the record of the public hearing on February 24.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Bebe McCarthy
27 Cattle Pen Ln Ridgefield, CT 06877-5829 bebesmc@yahoo.com

I am writing to oppose discounts for volume water users or, as the MDC wishes, economic discounts. Water is a public trust and should be for the benefit of the common good, not corporate profiteering. Bottling and reselling our community asset is pure profiteering.

And then there is the question, Why should MDC choose which corporations gain an advantage? Why should MDC choose winners and losers?

The MDC, no doubt, needs money to improve our water infrastructure. I want the improvements made and maintained, which is why MDC should increase the rates it charges Niagra. Here you have a company that wants this vital, life-sustaining resource. They are using a high volume and, therefore, taxing and wearing the system more for the sake of their profits via production.

In a time of drought or contamination, the MDC should have measures in place to provide safe, clean water to it's residents, not providing preference to a corporate competitor.

Given that all life depends on water and human life cannot live more than 3 days without water, the MDC must focus on their mission of providing safe, clean water to it's residents, not choosing business winners and losers.

Sincerely,
Mary Rydingsward, President
Pequabuck River Watershed Association
PO Box 1461
Bristol, CT

No discount for Niagra Bottling!! Give discounts to residents!!
Thank you
Leona,
06902

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the MDC's plan to offer discounts to Niagra Bottling Co, yet again.

Not only is this discount a slap in the face to the average bill-paying consumer, but it will result in the continued degradation of our planet due to millions more plastic water bottles entering our environment.

Finally, water is not a commodity to be sold to the highest bidder. It is a natural resource that needs (our) protection and care.

*Don't it always seem to go
That you don't know what you've got til its gone
They paved paradise
And put up a parking lot*

Thank you,
Nancy Dornenburg
225 Old farms Road
Simsbury, CT 06070

The plan to subsidize Niagara Bottling Company Operations is against everything we should be doing to encourage water conservation and stop the corporate takeover of our natural resources.

Alison Murdock
New Hartford Conservation Commission Chair,
Farmington River Coordinating Committee - Resource Stewardship Subcommittee Chair

Hello,

I am writing to voice my opinion about MDC's proposed water rate discounts to large corporations such as Niagara Bottling. I am opposed to corporations getting a handout while resident's rates climb. This is a corporate giveaway to a profitable water bottling company.

In the big picture we need to create disincentives for single use plastic bottles from entering our environment. In addition we need to conserve water for times of drought. Please reconsider efforts to give corporations volume rate discounts.

Sincerely,
Evelyn Betz
24 Park Road

Barkhamsted CT 06063

These discounts are nothing more than corporate welfare. I oppose any such special deal for a company using such a huge quantity of our natural resources.

Patrick Vingo
Bethany, CT

Dear Honorable MDC Commissioner,

I strongly oppose a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount for Niagara.

I ask that you protect our watershed and public drinking water source that belongs to all of us. It should never be squandered for huge corporate profit.

Please include my remarks in the record of the public hearing on February 24.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Patricia Anderson
18 Charles St Mystic, CT 06355-2104
andersonw461@gmail.com

Hello,

As a longtime CT resident I strongly oppose rewarding bulk water users with big discounts. This flies in the face of water conservation efforts across the state. MDC wants to give mega-bottler, Niagara Bottling a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount whenever monthly usage is over 600,000 gallons/day.

No one else will qualify for the discount, corporations will get a hand out while resident rates climb. It's up to you to stop this corporate give away for an already profitable water bottling giant. We need to stop millions more single-use plastic bottles from entering our environment and to protect our watersheds from water export in times of drought.

Thank you for your time and Please make the Right choice!

Best,
Elizabeth Kiernan
Ridgefield, CT

MDC,

I am deeply opposed to the Metropolitan District Commission giving massive discounts to large corporations, specifically Niagara Bottling. In the proposal, MDC is offering Niagara Bottling a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount when monthly usage is over 600,000 gallons a day.

This is incredibly biased and hurts Connecticut residents immensely. It favors large corporations while doing nothing to offer discounts to the real residents of our state. It amounts to exploitation by both MDC and Niagara Bottling and shows a complete lack of respect and concern for those of us who live in Connecticut.

Consumerism and waste (via plastic water bottles) and corporate handouts and corruption are major issues in our time and MDC should not be perpetuating either of these. MDC should be standing up for the residents, and should stop all plans for this discount offered to Niagara Bottling.

Thank you,
Jamila Viandier
12 Old Springfield Rd.
Stafford Springs, CT 06076

I would like to register by disapproval of MDC's proposed 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount whenever monthly usage is over 600,000 gallons/day. Why should taxpayers give this subsidy to a private company?

Please rethink this plan.
Margaret Sipple
Guilford, CT

Dear MDC Comments Clerk,

please register my extreme disgust and alarm at the plan to give water bottling companies a discount of 20% on water rates, this is hardly in line with water conservation efforts, nor is it FAIR or DECENT to give incentive to bottle water for PROFIT. This is plain WRONG.

Judi Mandl
Harwinton, CT

The Metropolitan District Commission should be encouraging and rewarding water conservation, not mega-bottling in single-use plastic bottles. Connecticut is moving toward discouraging single-use plastic products with its tax on single-use plastic bags. Why back away from that position and encourage high use of our limited water resources by rewarding usage over 600,000 gallons per day? Mega-bottlers should pay their fair share of water rates as residents do. I strongly oppose the proposed discount for mega-bottlers.

Joan Sitomer
55 Hemlock Trail
Trumbull, CT 06611
sitomer@icloud

Really? You want to drive conservations with grants and then give discounts to Niagara Bottling (>\$500M revenue in 2018). I work in this industry and there is no need to provide such deep discounts. Niagara doesn't want to move production because if they did they'd have to trek water farther and freight costs would increase. This should not affect CT employment. Are you going to give deep discount to Sealed Air in Danbury then?

Katie Callahan
International Marketing Systems
2 Corporate Drive Suite 136
Shelton, CT 06484
Ph 203-447-1915
Cell 203-606-5303

Niagra Bottling should not receive discounts when the company uses amounts of water that are over 600,000 gallons a day. They presumably pay people to lobby to get this advantage, but it is not appropriate for them to get discounts while ordinary people pay full amounts. The company should continue to pay the full amount and not be encouraged to increase the amounts that they use. We should stop millions more single-use plastic bottles from entering our environment and not facilitate this process.

Sincerely,
Priscilla Dannies
299 Edwards Street
New Haven CT 06511

We are writing to express our opposition to the corporate give away to Niagara Bottling that a rate discount would give them. It would threaten water conservation and increase the number of single use plastic bottles.

Thank you,
Jan and Mike Dudek
95 W Cornwall Rd
Sharon, CT

To Whom This May Concern:

As an environmentalist and someone who wants a sustainable planet for all future generations, I oppose the Metropolitan District Commission's plan to give mega-bottler, Niagara Bottling a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount whenever monthly usage is over 600,000 gallons/day!

Water is a public trust and no one should be giving major discounts to commercial water bottlers, while the costs to everyday citizens and those who cannot afford an increase, continue to rise. We need to stop millions more single-use plastic bottles from entering our environment and to protect our watersheds from water export in times of drought.

I urge you to reject the plan by Niagara Bottling!! It is not the right thing to do!!

Respectfully,
Beverly Proppen
185 Crocker Court
Orange, CT

I disagree with giving bulk water users big discounts.

Don Baxter
5 Storrs Heights Rd
Storrs CT 06268

I oppose the current path of corporate giveaways to mega users such as Niagara.
I oppose a reduction in cost for large volume users.
I oppose the approval of current and expanded access to these users.

JEFF DILL
Canton CT

Dear Honorable MDC Commissioner,

I strongly oppose a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount for Niagara.

I ask that you protect our watershed and public drinking water source that belongs to all of us. It should never be squandered for huge corporate profit.

Please include my remarks in the record of the public hearing on February 24.

Sincerely,
Mr. William White
23 Emerson St Norfolk, CT 06058-1129
nelswwhite@outlook.com

I am an over 40 year Connecticut resident. I find the proposal to allow MRDC give a discount to Niagara Bottling a disgrace. It promotes water usage- does no one remember several years ago when we had a 2 year drought? Due to climate change we cannot reliably predict the next one when we will have needed to save our water. It is also environmentally unsound because in addition to promoting water usage it promotes the use of individual plastic bottles which are an environmental hazard.
I ask that you do not give Niagara Bottling an unneeded discount.

Sincerely,
Nancy Silander
30 Silver Falls Lane
Storrs, CT 06268

I email to ask the MDC to remove discounts being offered to Niagara. Nlagara is a for-profit business that will be making money off of the extraction of public water without paying appropriately for the use of the infrastructure. This discounting will also continue to give economic incentive for the worrisome trend of bottling, trucking, selling and discarding bottled water.

Please take steps to safeguard this public resource and remove the MDC proposed discounts for Niagara.

Thank you!
Cyril John May
128 Nicoll Street
New Haven, CT 06511

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to let you know my opposition to Niagara Bottling being given a 20% water discount rate and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount. This goes against water conservation efforts across the state and we need to limit the use of single-use plastic bottles. Plus this benefits a corporation at the cost of rising water rates for the public.

Thank you.
Jennifer Klein
Fairfield, CT

To: J. Mirtle,

The Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) should NOT be allowed, again, to reward bulk water users with big discounts. This flies in the face of water conservation efforts across the state. **MDC wants to give mega-bottler, Niagara Bottling a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount whenever monthly usage is over 600,000 gallons/day.**

No one else will qualify for the discount, corporations will get a hand out while resident rates climb. STOP this corporate give away for an already profitable water bottling giant. We need to stop millions more single-use plastic bottles from entering our environment and to protect our watersheds from water export in times of drought.

The legislature confirmed that Water is a public trust! We must protect our state water supply and keep it assessable and affordable for the public, not give it away to corporations. In addition, we must eliminate plastic bottled water from the environment.

Sincerely,
Paula and Daniel Coughlin
Woodstock Valley, CT

I am opposed to this proposal because of Niagra's proliferation of the worst kind of flimsy water bottles. I hope there is some better alternative for Niagra and that any discount would be made conditional on their adopting some other kind of container to reduce the plastic pollution of our oceans.

NOTE: I fear that such an alternative may only be able to be promoted by a state or federal ruling, but I offer my concern anyway.

Joy Shaw, Fairfield, CT

I am strongly opposed to giving a discount to Niagara Bottling. MDC's mission is to provide their customers with safe, pure drinking water, environmentally protective wastewater collection and treatment, and other services that benefit member towns. Giving a massive discount to a mega user, such as Niagara, does not have a place in the mission statement.

How does giving a discount to Niagara benefit member towns, when residents and businesses had a recent rate increase? Clearly, member towns do not benefit.

Water is a priceless and finite resource. It must not be sold to a polluting, enormously profit making corporation at a discount. This is not sustainable, and it is not good for the people of Connecticut. Keep the water in Connecticut for the benefit of Connecticut residents.

In addition, if Niagara can produce 7.8 million single-use plastic bottles a day, when plastic pollution has loomed to the fore front as an enormous environmental problem, how can we justify any action which will only exacerbate this massive problem? It cannot be justified in any way!

Finally, Niagara already realizes huge profits without giving it another hand-out in the form of this proposed discount.

Maria Tulman
139 Hebron Rd. Andover, CT 06232

To whom it may concern:

I find it highly disconcerting and a great injustice that Niagra will receive this discount, especially as residents rate climb. I don't understand the business model. Shouldn't we be discounting corporations based on conservation vs. rewarding the super users of our natural resources and creators of tonnage of plastics. This is completely atrocious, and I plan on spreading the word among fellow CT residents.

Please reconsider!
Ellen Brett, CT resident

I'm writing to express my opposition to the MDC providing discounts to bulk water users. It goes against water conservation efforts across the state and residents who don't make a profit using the water. It also promotes single-use plastic bottles, which is one of the planet's worst environmental problems. MDC needs to protect CT's water, not give it away for profit.

Regards,
Carrie Kistner, Windsor Locks, CT

Bulk extractors of our water resources, held in the public trust, should not be rewarded with discounts that facilitate business activities and profit taking, that immediately present unnecessary challenges to the public in the form of plastic bottle trash and potential threats to water resources in times of drought.

D Magner
Easton

Good evening,

I am writing to express concern and disapproval for the MDC's plans to reward big corporations, such as Niagara bottling for using larger amounts of water. As water conservation efforts move to the forefront of environmental concerns, it seems as this action is counter productive! Thank you for taking the time to listen to the concerns of citizens.

Best Regards,
Liz Wimpfheimer
University of Connecticut
B.S. Allied Health Sciences, 2020

She/Her/Hers

It is obscene that a corporation should get a discount on water that is owned by the citizens who live where the rain falls, and that the same corporation makes huge profits from this, all while reducing availability to the local public which drives up the price for residents. What would justify this 'gift' to the corporation?

Best,
Jeff Becker
Jeff Becker Photography
5 Cedar Hill Road
Easton, CT 06612

To: The Metropolitan District Commission

Please accept these comments IN OPPOSITION to the proposed bulk discount rates. The Metropolitan District Commission should not be giving handouts to big companies like Niagara Bottling company, while residents' water use rates climb. The proposed 20% water rate discount and 75% Clean Water Project charge discount could equate to a \$2.3 million dollar giveaway to an already highly profitable corporation. Water bottling is already an extremely profitable business and requires no corporate subsidy. At the same time, resident rates climb by 13.5%!

At a time when plastic one-time use water bottles are falling out of fashion related to their very really, very damaging ecological effects—from over-use of water and rampant extraction of fossil fuels in plastic production, to the nightmare of plastic that ends up in our waterways—MDC's plan to raise money in such a fashion is archaic and woefully short-sighted. The state of CT is trying to dial back such failed practices, never mind that this proposal does not help the rate-paying citizens of the state a bit! Residents who use larger amounts of water certainly do not get a discounted rate—and no one should. Efforts must be engaged to save water, particularly when world-wide drought is common. We need to plan for our future by conserving our natural resources, not sell them off to become a major cog in our ever-growing trash epidemic.

Private utilities are regulated by the state, and the MDC should be no different, particularly when they continue to threaten CT's precious public trust resource as nothing more than a corporate asset.

Sincerely,
Kim Krodel
123 Cold Spring Road
Avon, CT 06001

Dear MDC,

Do NOT allow this egregious corporate give away to Niagra Bottling. They should be PENALIZED for extracting excessive amounts of water FOR THEIR PERSONAL PROFIT MARGIN, not rewarded w/ massive tax breaks!

Connecticut NEEDS more revenue, the corporations, particularly extractive out of state companies, should be paying their fair share of taxes to operate here. Niagra bottling will be using & degrading Connecticut's roads,

Not to mention other issues, i.e. extra plastic debris, potential environmental issues from plant operations. Any problems associated w/ their operations will be passed on to myself and all other Connecticut taxpayers, while ALL the profit goes to Niagra Bottling & whomever they pay off to get away w/ the outrageous tax breaks. DO NOT, give Niagra Bottling ANY TAX BREAKS!

THANK YOU IN ADVANCE.
Rachel Girshick 06247

To whom it may concern

I want to comment on the proposal to give Niagara a big discount for volume used and for increases. We don't want to sell our precious water outside the state!
Sincerely

Kerry Noble
Salisbury Ct 06068

Water is a human right ... no company, nobody has a right to corner it to put into plastic bottles for sale at a profit.

Tell Niagara Bottling to abandon this move against the future ... of the planet, of the future, of humanity.

DO NOT LET THEM GET AWAY WITH THIS NONSENSE!

Cindy Moeckel
79 Amidon Rd., Ashford, CT

I absolutely oppose MDC giving mega-bottler, Niagara Bottling a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount whenever monthly usage is over 600,000 gallons/day.

I don't agree with corporations getting a hand out while resident rates climb. We need to stop single-use plastic bottles from entering our environment and to protect our watersheds from water export in times of drought. There is so much progress happening in towns & in the state and a great deal of public support opposing plastic bottles. It's unconscionable to support the polluting plastic bottle industry. There is no good excuse for allowing this assault on the environment.

Thank you
Maura Robie
Woodstock, CT

To the MDC:

I very much oppose the proposed discounts for Niagra's high-volume water use. Potable water is a precious resource and needs to be conserved. Corporations that profit from selling water should pay the established rates for taking the water that they will sell. Giving high-volume discounts to such corporations wastes public money and simply lines the pockets of already wealthy companies. It also sends the wrong message to consumers - we were put on water restrictions last summer in order to conserve water. We all

did our part to help out - and now this company is going to be rewarded for heavy use? Please don't grant the proposed discounts to Niagara!

Sincerely,
Sarah Middeleer
7 S Main St
Newtown

Please convey our vehement disapproval of the MDC plan to give discounts to large commercial water users, especially those that resell water for profit. This is bad for the environment, the public consumers, and bad business practice.

Bill and Marilyn Kirwin
Clinton, Ct

Please do not reward bulk water users with big discounts. Not only is it completely unfair to the ordinary citizens of Connecticut, but creating more single use plastic bottles is a singularly bad idea.

I wish I could be at the hearing in person. This is very important to me and my family.

Elizabeth Coffey
Pawcatuck, CT

Dear MDC:

Even though I don't live in any of the towns under the MDC umbrella, I was quite disturbed to learn that the MDC is proposing to offer a corporate discount on water rates to Niagara Bottling. I am a firm believer in water conservation; this proposal, if adopted, will encourage water exploitation. As I understand the MDC's charter, your responsibility is to the citizens and ratepayers who depend on municipal water supplies, not to corporate profits. Please do not adopt this proposal.

Sincerely,
Douglas Clark
869 N Madison Rd, Guilford, CT 06437

MDC Clerk,

Please add my remarks to the public record.

I am opposed to any discounts that would encourage more water to be removed from the source here in CT. In fact I would like to see an increased fee for any amount exceeding a determined amount which could possibly reduce extraction and give something back at the same time.

Thank you.
Alissa Mulliken
137 Scott Hill Rd
Lebanon CT 06249
860-402- 0399

Dear MDC Clerk:

Please do not give Niagara Bottling discount rewards for producing more single-use plastic bottles. We need to protect our watersheds from exporting water in times of drought. I urge you to put consider residents first over corporate profits.

Sincerely,
Alison Barr Zyla
1 Shore Grove Road
Clinton, CT 06413

I cannot make the meeting but want to make a comment for the meeting tonight, February 24, 2020 that I am opposed to the Bulk water user discounts. We need to conserve water.

Regards,
Laura Janoski
Ivoryton, CT

I am writing to object to the fact that the MDC is considering giving large bottled water makers discounts on water used within the state of Connecticut, which in turn does not support water conservation & eventually puts the financial burden on the homeowner who uses public water supply.

My household is fortunate at present, as our town, for the most part, uses private wells, but that will be impacted if big water companies exceed the And, I encourage you to please listen to the objections of homeowners who are invested in the health of our state environment, not in big corporation profits!

Lisa Brodlie
41 Birch Hill Road
Weston, CT 06883

Dear MDC Clerk,

Increasing sales of bottled water in plastic bottles is so antithetical to all concepts of sustainability that it seems that your proposal must be a joke from a late-night comedy skit. That you believe this is in the interests of the public -- to decrease fees for this one company, while rating rates for the general public -- seems to be the essence of suspicious if not outright corrupt practices.

As global climate change increases the variability of the weather, giving us ever-wetter or drastically-drier summers, MDC should be husbanding this precious resource, rather than looking for ways to give it away. As we prepare for an uncertain future, water supplies should be used wisely and in ways that encourage opportunities for the future, rather than in short-sighted corporate pandering today. The sustainability of our mid-state region will depend on far-sighted thinking that serves the public interest.

If MDC is unable to manage this public resource in a responsible way, its duties should be given to a truly-independent agency. That this proposal is going forward for one beneficiary company, shows clearly that the present system is not working.

Sincerely,
Elisabeth Holder
Chairwoman
Middletown Commission on Conservation and Agriculture

It makes no sense to encourage people to use bottled water by giving Niagara a substantial discount, INSTEAD of none at all!! We can use a water filter in our own home to stop using bottled water, since then we do not have containers to dispose of.

Margaret Kilgore
Branford

We are opposed to the allowance of discount rates for bulk water usage by water bottling companies. The MDC should not be subsidizing the profits of water bottlers and increasing both the cost to towns for the disposal of plastic water containers and the continuing expansion of production of such containers in light of the harm to our air, soil and oceans caused by said production. Additionally, the increases in the cost of reliably safe drinking water to the general public continues while the water bottler's profits grow exponentially. DO NOT APPROVE THIS MDC REQUEST.

Respectfully,
Marge and David Schneider
78 Cedar Street,
Branford, CT 06405

TO: The Metropolitan District Commission Committee on MDC Government
RE: Proposed Discounts for High-Volume Sales
FROM: Margaret Miner, Environmental Consultant
DATE: February 24, 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the MDC proposal to offer discounts to high-volume water customers. I have been involved in water-planning discussions at the Water Planning Council and elsewhere since 2001, primarily as executive director of Rivers Alliance of Connecticut, a post from which I resigned in 2019. I continue to work on a number of water projects,

Discounts for high-volume sales is an outmoded business model for water, which is the state's most valuable natural resource and which is a finite resource. Shortages of high-quality water already affect many American communities and some two billion people worldwide.

One may think that water-supplies are ample in Connecticut or at least at the MDC, but prudent management calls for conservation. Each water utility is one catastrophic event away from an acute problem. Even a drought of a few months can stress supplies, as happened in 2015-2016. In the statewide WUCC planning process, almost all water utilities specified that that, in five years, they might need more new water than stipulated in their WUCC plans. While most utilities have a reasonably good understanding of the volumes of water presently available to their systems, no one has a clear picture of how much high-quality water is available for source development.

Given these conditions, the consensus among state water planners, including water utilities, is that conservation is essential to good stewardship of the resource. Providing discounts to high-volume customers is a reward for *non*-conservation.

Moreover, in this state, the public has made an extraordinary investment in guaranteeing as far as possible that source water is clean water. Connecticut is the only state that by law requires that water intended for potable use cannot have received a waste discharge upstream. This means that new sources tend to come from our best headwaters and upland streams or relatively uncontaminated aquifers. When an out-of-state customer wants to buy our raw water or treated water, the price should

reflect the investment made by the people of Connecticut. Our water is an upscale product and should be priced accordingly.

This is not to deny that the MDC faces a number of difficult economic problems. But these 21st-century problems need 21st century solutions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Margaret Miner
Roxbury CT
margaret.miner@charter.net

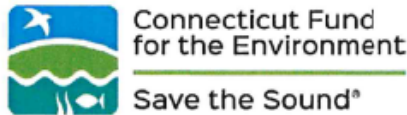
Dear MDC:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment on your plan to reward bulk water users with big discounts. Such a practice would fly in the face of water conservation efforts across Connecticut. It would be a slap in the face to regular water customers – just average law-abiding, tax-paying, voting citizens – if you give Niagara Bottling a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project charge discount whenever monthly usage is over 600,000 gallons/day.

It is completely unfair to give corporations a handout while rates climb for average residential water users. Niagara is already a profitable water bottling giant; they do not deserve this corporate give-away, which would be a discount that nobody else qualifies for.

Furthermore, we need to stop millions more single-use plastic bottles from entering our environment, and we need to protect our watersheds from water export during times of drought. Governor Lamont is trying to curb climate change and improve Connecticut's environment; such a deal with Niagara would be in direct opposition to his efforts.

Sincerely,
Jean Darlington, New Hartford, CT



February 24, 2020

John S. Mirtle, Esq.
District Clerk
The Metropolitan District
555 Main Street
Hartford, CT 06142

RE: Proposed Revisions to District Water Supply and Sewer Ordinances

Connecticut Fund for the Environment/Save the Sound is a nonprofit organization representing over 4,200 member households and 10,000 activists statewide. Our mission is to protect and improve the land, air, and water of Connecticut and the entire Long Island Sound region. We use legal and scientific expertise and bring citizens together to achieve results that benefit our environment for current and future generations.

Dear Mr. Mirtle, Mr. Jellison, and Commissioners,

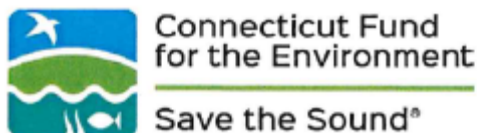
On behalf of Connecticut Fund for the Environment/Save the Sound, I am writing in strong opposition to the proposed revisions to the District Water Supply and Sewer Ordinances that would provide a 20% water rate discount and a 75% Clean Water Project Charge discount to one private bottled water company, Niagara Bottling. Such revisions encourage the excessive use of our water resources, at a time when we should be encouraging conservation. The exploitation of our public trust water resources for private profit is, in turn, subsidized by ratepayers who are also bearing the burden of infrastructure costs.

This proposal is an unacceptable and ill-conceived attempt at a silver bullet solution to MDC's realistic budget shortfalls, aggravated by mounting costs of maintaining and upgrading aging drinking water and sewer infrastructure and the impacts of reduced demand from residential users who are implementing conservation measures. These proposed revisions are directly contrary to the responsibilities of MDC and the needs of the state.

While MDC is proposing to incentivize excessive use, the State is undertaking water planning efforts to prepare for climate change and future drought conditions, including water conservation policy measures, as the implementation of Connecticut's State Water Plan gets underway. The overarching goal of the State Water Plan is to: "Balance the use of water to meet all needs." Many river basins in Connecticut have plentiful water, but many others cannot satisfy current needs...during droughts or even during typical summer conditions."¹ While MDC must grapple

¹ Connecticut State Water Plan, Final Report at ES-2, 5-40 (Jan. 2018).

900 Chapel Street | Upper Mezzanine | New Haven, Connecticut 06510 | 203-787-0646 | www.ctenvironment.org
545 Tompkins Avenue | 3rd Floor | Mamaroneck, New York 10543 | 914-381-3140 | www.savethesound.org



with the economic impacts of reduced demand through conservation, incentivizing high consumption is not an appropriate way to do so.

Of course, this is not the first time discounts for large-scale private bottled water companies have been under consideration. In 2016, for example, such discounts were suspended because of drought conditions, as MDC CEO Scott Jellison explained: “Given the sensitivity to the drought the entire state is experiencing, we believe and I believe and the board and chairman believes we should reconsider incentivizing a high consumption.”² But the best time to prepare for a drought is before one occurs, so that resources are not already strained when extreme weather conditions take place. MDC must commit to encouraging conservation of water resources and not lock itself into a profit structure that depends on ongoing large volume users, such as Niagara, because the state will, indeed, face drought conditions again.

We understand the mounting costs of MDC’s infrastructure needs, with aging infrastructure and the need to grapple with its combined sewer system. However, this large volume-based discount is not the appropriate solution. First, it is not clear that this discount is necessary to incentivize Niagara to remain as a customer of MDC’s. In 2018, Niagara added a third bottling line, without the discount in place. Second, if this discount is not for the purposes of retaining Niagara as a large volume customer that begs the question of whether MDC seeks to entice new large-volume users or a significant expansion of Niagara’s facilities. If that is the case, the impacts of this discount on the adequacy of MDC’s drinking water resources is compounded beyond any calculations made today as justification.

This is not the time to increase unnecessary bottling of drinking water resources. Connecticut has set itself apart as a leader in the protection of drinking water sources and ensuring that only the highest quality water is used as drinking water supply. It did not do so for the profit of private companies, but for the benefit of its citizens. That must not be exploited here through such an incentive.

We strongly oppose MDC’s attempt to hand a single corporation a discount to exploit our state’s precious water resources. Not only is this discount contrary to proper stewardship and resource planning, but it will not be effective as a single bullet solution to any financial burdens faced by MDC. It will simply supplement the profits of Niagara Bottling and shift the burden onto residential customers, or leave MDC still searching for consistent funding sources. We welcome a dialogue to discuss real, smart solutions to MDC’s budget needs, so that MDC can satisfy its responsibilities as a steward of our most precious natural resource and also make necessary and urgent infrastructure investments. The price of this work might be significant, but it is not so great that preserving adequate water supply for instream and drinking water needs must be dismissed.

² Jill Konopka, *MDC Rethinking Deal with Bloomfield’s Niagara Bottling*, NBC Connecticut (Nov. 22, 2016).



Connecticut Fund
for the Environment

Save the Sound®

Let us not forget that: "It is hereby found and declared that there is a public trust in the air, *water* and other natural resources of the state of Connecticut and that each person is entitled to the protection, preservation and enhancement of the same. It is further found and declared that it is in the public interest to provide all persons with an adequate remedy to protect the air, *water* and other natural resources from unreasonable pollution, impairment or destruction."³

Sincerely,

Katherine M. Fiedler, Esq.

Legal Fellow

Connecticut Fund for the Environment/Save the Sound

900 Chapel Street, Suite 2202

New Haven, CT 06510

(203) 787-0646 ext. 108

kfiedler@ctenvironment.org



Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Wild and Scenic Committee

Partners:
 Town of Avon
 Town of Bloomfield
 Town of Burlington
 Town of East Granby
 Town of Farmington
 Town of Granby
 Town of Hartland
 Town of Simsbury
 Town of Windsor
 Connecticut Department of
 Energy & Environmental
 Protection
 Farmington River
 Watershed Association
 Pequabuck River Watershed
 Association
 Salmon Brook Watershed
 Association
 Stanley Black and Decker
 U.S. National Park Service

February 23, 2020

John S. Mirtle, Esq
 District Clerk, The Metropolitan District
 555 Main Street Hartford, CT 06142

Dear Mr. Mirtle, Mr. Jellison and Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed MDC special discount rates for large users of MDC provided water.

My name is Sally Rieger. I am Interim Chairman of the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Wild and Scenic Committee (LFSWS) and I am writing on behalf of the Committee. The Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook were designated Wild and Scenic by the Congress of the United States in March, 2019. The Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Wild and Scenic Committee is the advisory river management committee that results from designation.

The Committee's mission is to lead and to coordinate implementation of our Management Plan. We are charged with working toward the cooperative resolution of river issues relevant to the free-flowing character of the Lower Farmington River and to the Outstanding Resources for which it was designated Wild and Scenic. We have no legal power, but only the power of moral persuasion and of the public opinion behind us in the nine towns that our designated area includes.

Both the free-flowing nature of the Lower Farmington River and several of its Outstanding Resources are threatened by the MDC discount rate plan, which includes both reduced water and sewage rates. Your discount plan strongly and permanently encourages the use of large amounts of water, and is aimed at Niagara Bottling and potentially other entities that could consume the amount of water that sets off the discount rates. I anticipate that you will argue that you have sufficient water in your impoundments to

c/o Farmington River Watershed Association, 749 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, Ct 06070, 860-658-4442

maintain adequate supplies of water for drinking and other residential necessities such as cooking and bathing while at the same time supplying water to large users. It is not clear, in light of the drought of 2016 and 2017, that this is, in fact, the case. However, the issue that is pertinent to LFSWS is Farmington River's flows and consequently its wildlife, the ability of farmers along the river to exercise their riparian rights for irrigation and also the ability of the residents of our towns to enjoy traditional recreation on the river.

The framers of the MDC Charter, approved in 1929, anticipated that the MDC would recognize the need to release water from its East Branch impoundment on the Farmington to maintain flows downstream in the river. Section 6-4 of the Charter says that the MDC "may use any part of the water" stored in the East Branch reservoir "which is not needed for its water supply system for the purpose of returning to said Farmington river at convenient times water ... for regulating the discharge and flow of water in said river for the purpose of maintaining in said river a more constant flow regardless of seasonal variation."

Of course, no one expects that the MDC would be releasing water to sustain flows in a severe drought situation that required protecting supply to meet human needs. However, the framers of the MDC Charter would not have anticipated the immense consumption of water by water bottlers, a use which, in effect, is an industrial exploitation of a public trust resource. At the time that the Charter was written and approved, there was not a significant water bottling industry in the United States. By the early 1900s, public water utilities were chlorinating water supplies, resulting in tap water that was safe to drink. The availability of potable tap water effectively ended an earlier practice of providing bottled water in glass containers. The organization, Great Lakes Law, writes that "Bottled water went out of style and need in the early twentieth century, when the advent of chlorination in municipal drinking water supplies made public water consistently healthy and safe to drink." It wasn't until the mid 1970's that Perrier's advertising campaign in the U.S. stimulated the growth of the water bottling industry. [/https://www.greatlakeslaw.org/blog/2009/03/a-brief-history-of-bottled-water-in-america.html](https://www.greatlakeslaw.org/blog/2009/03/a-brief-history-of-bottled-water-in-america.html).

This history makes it clear that the framers of the MDC Charter never intended for the term "water supply system" as it was used in the Charter to cover taking water from the East Branch of the Farmington River to sell for commercial export. Nor did the Charter include any provision for discounts for the use of large volumes of water.

Section 6-4 of your Charter makes it clear that in dry times, the framers of the Charter expected that, if you had water to spare as you assert that you do, you would recognize and act on a responsibility to the resource and release water downstream. Biological diversity, the Cultural Landscape and Recreation are three of the Outstanding Resources for which the Lower Farmington River was designated. Fish and mussels and other wildlife depend on the water in the river, including great blue herons and bald eagles which nest along the river and eat its fish. The farms along the Farmington River are part of our Cultural Landscape and have economic value. Those farms, for example Rosedale Farm in Simsbury, rely on the water in the river to support their crops. Recreational uses of the river – swimming, canoeing, kayaking, fishing – all occur in the lower Farmington River and have important social, health and economic values. All of these Outstanding Resources depend on adequate flows.

In a time of substantial changes in the climate with more extreme and frequent droughts predicted, we face circumstances which require all of us, citizens, corporations and water utilities, to conserve water. It is not a time to provide incentives for extreme water consumption by rewarding it with lower rates. Importantly, it is time for the MDC to recognize the intent of its own Charter to use some of the water it stores to sustain the flows downstream in the spirit of supporting and sustaining the Outstanding Resources of a newly designated Wild and Scenic river.

Sincerely,

Sally Rieger
Interim Chairman
Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Wild and Scenic Committee



PO Box 7114
Wilton, CT 06897
norwalkriver.org

February 23, 2020

John S. Mirtle, Esq
District Clerk
The Metropolitan District
555 Main Street
Hartford, CT 06142

Dear Mr. Mirtle, Mr. Jellison and Commissioners,

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed revisions to District Water Supply and Sewer Ordinances.

The Norwalk River Watershed Association (NRWA) is a regional non-profit organization dedicated to protecting the Norwalk River and its watershed. In the context of the drought conditions we've experienced in Connecticut in recent years and the uncertain future climate change presents for our environment and our water supply, NRWA is increasingly focused on water conservation and the protection of our water supply and vulnerable waterways.

We understand that the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) is once again planning to offer super users of the water supply large discounts, and specifically that it is offering Niagara Bottling a 20% discount for water and 75% discount for Clean Water Project (CWP) charges that applies when their monthly usage exceeds 600,000 gallons per day.

This represents a major setback to state-wide water conservation efforts. And it means that large corporations will get a hand out even as residential rates climb.

As we have previously stated, the NRWA opposes discounted or reduced rates for large volume users because this practice is inconsistent with the promotion of conservation of Connecticut's irreplaceable natural water resources. The State Water Plan affirms that water is a sacred public trust resource to be preserved and conserved for present and future generations and requires that the state manage these resources as a responsible trustee of the environment.

Offering volume-based reduced rates targeted to industries like commercial bottling is a practice that is inconsistent with this mandate. Such an approach will pollute the environment with plastic, create

artificial demand, and detract from the funding of the public water system. Water bottling is already a very profitable business and requires no corporate subsidy.

In addition to the financial inequity that would be suffered by residential customers who have subsidized the water infrastructure for years through property taxes and water bills, there is no mechanism for mandatory suspension of commercial water usage during droughts until water shortages reach extreme levels. This means that in times of drought, state residents would have to comply with water restrictions while corporate bottlers continue to pump and profit without restriction until reservoirs are in dire circumstances. This scenario is clearly at odds with the public trust doctrine and must be prevented.

NRWA supports the development and imposition of restrictions on super users in times of water shortages and drought. We also support a pricing structure that promotes conservation. For example, we support the implementation of a low rate for families up to the amount of water needed for basic daily living. As water usage increases above the basic needs level, the usage rate increases accordingly. Tying pricing to the volume of water used promotes conservation and is a sensible management tool to protect our water supply.

With the impacts of climate change escalating, there are many unknowns as to the future of our water supply. Prudent management requires that we take a conservative approach to preserve and protect water for our residents, our water-dependent industries like oyster farming, and other sustainable uses. Proper water management is essential to Connecticut's property values, and to the state's ability to attract employers, families and others who contribute to our prosperity.

While we understand the fiscal and social complexities involved as the MDC seeks to set water and sewer rates, NRWA vehemently opposes offering a discount on water and sewer rates to high volume super users as a responsible solution.

Any economic development rate or variable rate structure the MDC devises should not be volume based. Efforts to attract large volume users should be more than matched by efforts to protect existing customers and our irreplaceable natural water supply.

Sincerely,

Cathy Smith
NRWA Board Member

**Written Testimony for the Record of the February 24, 2020 Public Hearing on MDC
Volume Discounts for Commercial Water Use/Niagara Bottling Company** 1

February 24, 2020

VIA EMAIL TO: jmirtle@themdc.com

Attn: District Clerk
The Metropolitan District
555 Main Street
Hartford, CT 06103

**RE: Written Testimony for the Record of the February 24, 2020 Public Hearing on MDC
Volume Discounts for Commercial Water Use/Niagara Bottling Company**

As the MDC once again considers whether to approve volume discounts for commercial user Niagara Bottling company, I respectfully submit the following testimony in opposition to any policy that offers high-volume discounts to Niagara, or for any commercial use.

A. High volume discounts are poor public policy

The stated purpose of an economic development rate is to offset and mitigate the burden of rising maintenance and repair costs. As such, the MDC should not incentivize a single high-volume user, such as Niagara Bottling Company, with volume-based discounts to draw more and more water from our public water supply, then ship the water out of state, increasing pollution from single use plastic bottles and adding to carbon emissions. It doesn't add up.

Serving the special interests of one company with volume-based discounts does not serve the interests of the residents of this state.

Water bottlers from out-of-state that profit from Connecticut's water should pay at least as much as residents. Corporate interests must pay their fair share of the ever-increasing costs of protecting water quality, maintaining and replacing aging infrastructure, and treating our wastewater.

MDC policy should support implementation of the state water plan's objectives before discounting our precious, limited drinking water for corporate interests. Not all of Connecticut is water-rich and we must ensure there is adequate water for ALL of Connecticut's residents, businesses, environment, and agriculture.

B. All rate structures must ensure that Connecticut water is sustainably managed for future generations

1. Economic development rates and/or volume discounts must have time limits

We cannot be shortsighted in today's world. The MDC's water management decisions must balance economic return with protection of water resources that are codified as a public trust under the Connecticut State Statutes.

Written Testimony for the Record of the February 24, 2020 Public Hearing on MDC 2
Volume Discounts for Commercial Water Use/Niagara Bottling Company

High volume discounts should never be offered in perpetuity. Even economic development rates must be periodically reviewed and adjusted as conditions change. We cannot sell the future of Connecticut water rights to private interests to solve an immediate gap in revenue.

2. Emerging needs beyond “population growth” and “development needs” demand urgent conservation practices

Much of the data cited in the MDC “Water Supply Facts” press release from 2016 indicates that water management practices are intended to serve “population growth and development needs” for the next 50 years.

However, there are and will be other needs beyond population growth and development needs. “Best management practices” for “maintaining the highest standard for water quality and protecting our water resources for the next 50 years” must consider unpredictable environmental conditions, rising temperatures and climate change.

Although the Commissioners today will not see the world 50 years from now, we must act urgently and conservatively to protect our state’s water resources from unknown impacts of future droughts and other severe weather changes, especially as recorded temperatures continue to rise year-over-year.

We must think *beyond* 50 years. A public trust resource does not have an expiration date. Nothing is guaranteed. The past is no longer a predictor of the future, and the state must maintain control of our water resources, NOT allow them to be controlled by privatized corporate interests.

3. Trigger points must be high to revoke water privileges for water bottlers

Agreements regarding commercial use of water—especially by water bottlers—must protect residents in a drought. Water bottling companies sending millions of gallons of Connecticut water out of state for corporate profit should not have any priority over in-state resident use of water in times of drought and should be strictly prohibited.

Economic development rates must be prioritized *below* use of water for by citizens. High volume discounts do the opposite.

According to the MDC Water Supply Fact release, restrictions on water use go into effect at certain “trigger points,” including:

- 75% - Request municipal officials to cut back water use on non-essential operations (street cleaning, watering, and vehicle washing)
- 10% - Cut back of designated industrial operations

Any economic development rates for water bottlers must be clearly defined. Clearly water bottling is a non-essential operation that is solely for profit and should follow the 75% trigger point (it uses more water than “lawn sprinkling” (53% trigger)), or higher.

Written Testimony for the Record of the February 24, 2020 Public Hearing on MDC 3
Volume Discounts for Commercial Water Use/Niagara Bottling Company

C. Economic development rates should be available to companies large and small.

Instead, economic development rates should be available more widely. More accessibility of economic development rates would serve to bring in more users and more revenue. With a lower usage requirement, and no high-volume discounts, the sale of Connecticut water would bring in more revenue and level the playing field.

At the end of the day, selling more and more water for a low price water is not a solution to budget deficits and rising costs. Water is a finite resource that is essential to life. It must be thoughtfully managed and protected in perpetuity for citizen use in an uncertain future.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Galinski
Simsbury, CT

*The Jonah Center for Earth and Art**P.O. Box 854**Middletown CT 06457**(860) 398-3771**www.thejonahcenter.org**[email jhall@thejonahcenter.org](mailto:jhall@thejonahcenter.org)*

February 24, 2020

To: Metropolitan District Commissioners

Re: Proposed changes to ordinances and regulations allowing discounts to large volume users

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the question of whether the MDC should be permitted to offer large volume discounts to commercial users of water. I understand that this issue arises because of the prospect of Niagara Bottling Company purchasing water at a proposed bottling plant. I wish to express opposition to such discounts for 2 main reasons.

- 1.) While our area usually has an adequate water supply, our water assets may be severely stressed in the not-too-distant future due to climate change and population migration. As it is, rivers and streams are not protected from permitted diversions that exceed the river flow. This threat is especially acute in the summer dry spells when rivers are low. We should not be encouraging and subsidizing water use through discounts. Water is a public trust and should not be used to help corporations be more profitable.
- 2.) Bottling water is an environmentally destructive practice, due to the use of oil to make the bottles and due to the bottles ending up littering the landscape, rivers, and oceans, and adding to the volume of solid waste requiring disposal. The last thing we need is more bottled water. Our society needs to learn that bottled water is expensive, no cleaner than tap water, and totally unnecessary except in case of emergency.

Thank you for your consideration of these views.

Sincerely,

John C. Hall, Executive Director

Our mission: to foster sustainable relationships among people, other creatures, energy resources, and the environment and to promote interdisciplinary community partnerships in scientific, artistic, and other cultural endeavors.



February 21, 2020

John S. Mirtle, Esq
District Clerk
The Metropolitan District
555 Main Street
Hartford, CT 06142

Dear Mr. Mirtle, Mr. Jellison and Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed revisions to District Water Supply and Sewer Ordinances.

Rivers Alliance of Connecticut opposes offering discounts for water and sewer rates specific to large-volume users for two reasons:

- The MDC must meet the challenges of paying for the ever-increasing cost of replacing and maintaining an aging and vital infrastructure. Offering a discount to those who profit from our water unfairly places the burden on average customers.
- The resource and the average customer are not adequately protected from overuse by these large volume users in the MDC's Water Supply Plan during water supply emergencies.

Water Rates From the 10,000 FT Level – Balancing value to the customer with the need to maintain infrastructure.

It is the responsibility of a utility to balance affordability, economic development, promotion of conservation, and revenue stability and resiliency. MDC is experiencing the same difficulty as many other utilities across our state and the country in meeting this challenge. As customers have gotten better at conserving water, utilities have seen a decrease in revenue but have the same bills to pay even when customers use less water.

Sadly, many customers do not understand or appreciate the value of their drinking water and wastewater services and have come to expect very reasonable rates. And in an effort to keep water and sewer charges low, spending on infrastructure (pipes, filtration plants, pumps, etc) declines. Problems with infrastructure do not go away – they only get larger and more expensive. Here in New England, our pipes are among the oldest in the nation and well beyond their expected lifespan. In 2011, the EPA estimated that \$384 billion in investment would be needed nation-wide for our drinking water systems. It is unrealistic to believe that important infrastructure investments can be delayed indefinitely while still maintaining safe, reliable drinking water.

Decision makers are rightfully sensitive to the fact that there are many customers that will struggle if rates rose to meet the demands of infrastructure investment. The MDC has worked with groups like Operation Fuel to initiate pilot programs that would bring aid to those who will be most impacted by increasing water rates. Citizens enagaging their US Senators and Congressperson for more federal funding for water and wastewater infrastructure would also mitigate some of this burden.

With the fiscal and social complexities involved, one can sympathize with the position that the MDC finds itself in regard to setting water and sewer rates. However, Rivers Alliance of Connecticut vehemently disagrees that offering a discount on both water and sewer rates to very high volume users is the responsible solution.

Inadequate protection of the resource and average customers from large-volume users.

What is especially problematic about large volume-based discounts designed to attract businesses that use hundreds of thousands to millions of gallons a day is that all other existing customers and our natural resource are not adequately protected from overuse by these businesses in MDC's emergency supply plan. According to a Water Supply Fact Sheet released by the MDC in 2016, industrial users are not required to cut back until MDC reservoirs are at 10% of total capacity. Other customers are asked to cut back on non-essential water use when reservoirs are at 75% of total capacity. . It is absolutely true that the MDC barely reached the 75% trigger during the last drought that prompted water supply emergencies in several communities. However, the MDC has clearly stated an intention to attract as many large volume water users as possible. If this goal were to come to fruition, there would be several users consuming hundreds of thousands to millions of gallons per day.

Water bottling is a seasonal business. Production peaks during hot summer months and declines for the rest of the year. So in the case of water bottling operations, this consumption would peak during months of drought when our drinking water supplies and streamflows are most vulnerable.

Water rate roulette and a matter of fair policy.

The MDC is characterizing these discounts as a "magic silver bullet" that will increase revenue so dramatically that this action will ultimately lower rates for residential customers. The claim is that discounts are needed to guarantee an increasing revenue stream from Niagara Bottling and attract other large water bottlers as well as to-be-determined large users. Niagara Bottling added a third bottling line in 2018. Apparently, business was profitable enough for the company to add an additional line without special discounts. Why give discounts when they are not needed? Unless there are undisclosed deals in the works, the promise that corporations who use large-volumes of water will be beating a path to MDC member towns to use MDC's "excess" water makes this risk of revenue loss feel like a high-stakes gamble.

Niagara Bottling is highly unlikely to ever use the 1.8 million gallons per day (MGD) 365 days a year that it's allowed to. Based on the bottler's pattern of consumption in 2019, if they were to add a 4th line, they would be likely to use 1.8 million gpd only in June, July, and August.

Other water utilities in Connecticut offer economic development rates and have variable rate structures but these structures and policies are not designed to target one user or one user type.

Regional Water Authority (RWA) in New Haven offers an economic development rate “as an incentive to encourage new commercial or industrial customers in its service area, for significantly expanding operations, or distressed businesses contemplating closing by assessing the customer at 80% of applicable water rates for the first five (5) years of occupancy.” This incentive rate is neither based on volume nor is it offered in perpetuity.

Connecticut Water Company structures rates by user type (i.e. residential, commercial, industrial). Again, this rate structure is not based on volume and applies to all customers categorically. Only 15% of water suppliers in Connecticut offer a declining block rate (the price of water goes down as the customer uses more water), which is somewhat analogous to the rate structure being proposed. This is a rate structure we should be moving away from, not moving toward, if we are to encourage sustainable use of our water resources.

Similarly, some wastewater utilities have variable sewer rate structures for customers who purchase large amounts of water but either consume a large amount of that water for products or for power generation. These rates apply to all customers who qualify and, typically, the rates are calculated after a study is carried out. This type of practice is based on a utility policy and procedure that is applied evenly. Again, this variable rate structure is not triggered by volume of water consumed.

The Bottom Line

One corporation that makes a healthy profit from a precious, limited, high quality, public trust resource is being offered a sweet deal. The burden of paying full price for the important and ever-increasing costs of protecting water quality, maintaining and replacing aging infrastructure, and taking away and treating our wastewater so that it can be put back into the waters that we rely on for recreation as well as economic development falls on every other MDC customer. If the MDC is going to offer an economic development rate or devise a variable rate structure, it should not be volume based. And efforts to attract large volume users should be matched by efforts to protect existing customers and our natural resource.

Sincerely,



Alicea Charamut
Executive Director

ADJOURNMENT

The public hearing was adjourned at 8:48 PM

ATTEST:

John S. Mirtle, Esq.
District Clerk

Date of Approval