



**WATER SUPPLY CITIZENS  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
to the Mass. Water Resources Authority

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October 29, 2021

The Honorable Rebecca Rausch, Senate Chair  
Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture  
State House Room 218, Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Carolyn Dykema, House Chair  
Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture  
State House Room 473F, Boston, MA 02133

Re: Support for H.898/S.530, *An Act relative to maintaining adequate water supplies through effective drought management*

Chair Rausch, Chair Dykema, and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Water Supply Citizens Advisory Committee (WSCAC), and as a member of the Drought Management Task Force, we appreciate the opportunity to submit comments in favor of H.898/S.530, *An Act relative to maintaining adequate water supplies through effective drought management*.

During the drought in 2016 and the flash drought of 2020, it was clear that the response to drought conditions varies by municipality. While some communities implemented water conservation measures, others did not. Many towns do not have a drought plan in place to direct a timely response to drought conditions. This fragmented and often delayed approach has affected public water supplies, agriculture, loss of aquatic life and increased fire danger.

The MA Drought Management Plan includes comprehensive actions towns can take if a level of drought is declared, and these can increase if the drought increases in severity. However, these actions are voluntary unless there is a declared emergency. Previous droughts have shown the need for an earlier and more uniform response from communities in drought regions. Passing this legislation will bring the Drought Plan into action across the state. The result can translate into a coordinated approach to water conservation efforts during a drought.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lexi Dewey  
Executive Director  
WSCAC