

Dear Members of the House Housing Committee,

I am writing to express serious concerns about **HB 459-FN**, specifically its failure to consider **water supply issues** in municipalities that **lack municipal or community water systems**.

I have served on **Chesterfield's Planning Board for over 15 years** and am very familiar with these issues. Chesterfield, like many New Hampshire towns, **relies entirely on private wells for drinking water**. While the bill ties **minimum lot sizes to septic system requirements** under **RSA 485-A and Env-Wq 1000**, it **completely ignores the impact on groundwater safety**. Smaller lots mean higher housing density, which can increase the risk of **well contamination** due to:

1. **Reduced spacing between wells and septic systems**, leading to higher **nitrate levels** and potential **bacterial contamination**.
2. **Insufficient groundwater recharge**, which can **lower water tables** and affect **both the owner's well performance and that of their neighbors**.
3. **Increased stormwater runoff**, which could introduce **pollutants** into private wells and local water bodies like **Spofford Lake**.

While the bill requires "empirical evidence" to justify larger lot sizes, **it does not acknowledge that safe well placement requires specific lot sizing considerations independent of septic systems**. **Why was water supply omitted from this bill?** Was this an oversight, or is the intent to force **denser development** without addressing **drinking water safety**?

I urge the committee to **amend HB 459-FN** to explicitly require that **minimum lot sizes account for private well placement and groundwater protection, not just septic system regulations**. Towns without municipal water **must retain the ability** to set reasonable lot sizes that ensure **safe, sustainable drinking water** for residents. The **State recommends a minimum of 2 acres** for a lot with both **a well and septic system**, and when considering a subdivision, the local **aquifer's performance is unknown until owners begin drilling wells**.

Please let me know how the committee **intends to address this issue**. I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

James Corliss

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