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February 3, 2014

The Honorable David Deen, *Chair*
House Committee On Fish, Wildlife And Water Resources
Vermont State House
Montpelier, VT 05633

CC: James McCullough, *Vice Chair*
Stephen Beyor
Willem Jewett
Robert Krebs
Mark Huntley
Constance Quimby
Thomas Terenzini
Kathryn Webb

RE: House Bill 586: An act relating to improving the quality of State waters

Dear Representative Deen:

On behalf of Seventh Generation, I thank the Committee for this opportunity to testify in support of H. 586, an act relating to improving the quality of State waters.

Seventh Generation is the nation's leading brand of household and personal care products designed to help protect human health and the environment. Established in 1988, the Burlington, Vermont based company employs over 130 people, and remains an independent, privately-held company distributing products to natural food stores, supermarkets, mass merchants, and online retailers across the United States and Canada.

Among the products manufactured and sold by Seventh Generation are "flushable products" including toilet tissue, body and hand soap, laundry detergents and dish detergents, as identified in the Bill as Introduced.

Seventh Generation has been working passionately for years to protect the waters of our State, and of the other jurisdictions in which our products are sold. To that end, Seventh Generation soaps and detergents, including laundry detergents and automatic dishwasher detergents, have been biodegradable and free of phosphates since they were first introduced in 1990.



Seventh Generation supports the objectives of H. 586, to improve the quality of Vermont's waters. These waters are critical to the health of our citizens and the health of our economy. Our agriculture and our tourism both require healthy waterways to prosper.

Seventh Generation is agnostic on the use of an excise tax to fund the measures put forth in H. 586. The excise tax will affect all manufacturers of flushable products, and will neither advantage nor disadvantage any single manufacturer. Further, it is not anticipated that demand for these items will be significantly reduced by the increased cost.

Seventh Generation asks that the Committee consider the impact of the proposed excise tax on families with low income, and that the Committee propose mechanisms to protect those families from any burdens they might otherwise suffer from such tax.

Thank you for your attention to, and consideration of, these comments.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin H. Wolf". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Martin H. Wolf
Director, Product Sustainability & Authenticity