**Stephen Harding**

State Senator for the 30th District

Ranking Member, Environment Committee

Legislative Office Building

Room 3400

300 Capitol Avenue

Hartford, CT 06106

**Karen Reddington-Hughes**

State Representative for the 66th District

Member, Environment Committee

Legislative Office Building

Room 4200

300 Capitol Avenue

Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Dear Senator Harding/Representative Reddington-Hughes,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I live in/at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (town or address). I am writing to express my concern about the environmental health of Bantam Lake and kindly request that you take prompt action to address the ongoing issue of harmful Cyanobacteria algae blooms.

Cyanobacteria a.k.a.blue-green algae have been reproducing in Bantam Lake at alarming rates due to excessive loading of nutrients and warmer water temperatures. This results in harmful water conditions that prevent the full use and enjoyment of Bantam Lake. This also impacts the entire Bantam Lake Watershed, comprising Goshen, Litchfield, Morris, and Torrington. If action is not taken to address this issue, it will result in irreversible harm to Bantam Lake and its environment, local property values, and the overall economic health of the region. Health hazards to humans and animals are also of grave concern.

As Ranking Member of the Environment Committee, I respectfully ask that you take action to protect the interests of your constituents here at Bantam Lake and its 21,000 acre watershed.

A primary cause of nutrient loading in Bantam Lake is the inadequate Woodridge Lake Sewer system (in Goshen). Continued development and additional tie-ins to this system (particularly since covid) is straining the capacity of the already antiquated wastewater treatment facility. While WLSD is cooperating with efforts to find a sustainable solution, the state of the Bantam Lake continues to worsen while expansion of the Woodridge Lake area continues to increase. Clearly greater intervention from state officials is required.

In 1989, WLSD entered into a consent order with the State of CT DEEP, requiring it to “address its sanitary sewer collection and wastewater treatment and disposal needs.” This consent order remains in effect and allows DEEP to impose heavy fines if WLSD if it is not in compliance. In accordance with your oversight responsibilities as Ranking Member of the Environment Committee, I ask that you take action to ensure DEEP lives up to its responsibilities set forth under this consent order.

Pending a sustainable, long-term solution to the WLSD, and other sources of nutrient loading, the Bantam Lake Protective Association (BLPA) hopes to deploy an Alum (aluminum sulfate) treatment to address Cyanobacteria algae. Alum treatments are very expensive (over 2.5 million dollars), but would provide relief and a return to healthy water quality for at least 10 years while permanent nutrient loading solutions are employed. Previous stopgap treatment costs and management of the lake have been borne by the BLPA with donations and fundraising; however, this astronomic cost is beyond their financial scope. These financial and managerial obligations should not be the sole responsibility of the BLPA given the public access and State of CT marina that exists on Bantam Lake.

As Ranking Member of the Environment Committee, I also ask that you help advocate for funding for this Alum treatment and continued maintenance of Bantam Lake (as promised in a draft proposal by the State of CT DEEP in 2011) to allow for abatement of harmful algae blooms and continued stewardship of Bantam Lake.

The condition of Bantam Lake is directly tied to the economic prosperity of your district and the health and wellbeing of your constituents. I ask that you take prompt action to address these issues and keep my community updated on any developments.

Sincerely,

(Your name)