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PRESS RELEASE

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Senator Anne Gobi Secures Funding in Senate Budget for a Water Line Study in Sturbridge

BOSTON – As the Town of Sturbridge battles with water contamination issues, **Senator Anne M. Gobi (D-Spencer)** has secured funding in the Senate Budget to study the costs of a connection to a water source for residents who are currently experiencing contamination in their water wells. This is seen as a major step towards getting families off of bottled water and back to a secure, clean water source. The funding is subject to conference committee negotiations, which will occur in the month of June.

Senator Gobi spoke on this issue on the Senate floor: “There's an unfortunate situation in Sturbridge. There's contamination coming into their private wells, carcinogen. A neighborhood has been on bottled water since the beginning of this year. It's believed the carcinogens are coming from a landfill in a neighboring community. The DEP has found that landfill to be responsible for contamination in Charlton. DEP hasn't said that's the source in Sturbridge, but it's widely believed. They need a water line study. We cannot be a Flint, Michigan in 2017 and have people on bottled water for who knows how long. When they find a party, hopefully that party will be responsible for paying for the entire mitigation.”

The same harmful toxins found in water wells in the Town of Charlton were found in the Town of Sturbridge dating back to June of last year. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) has monitored the contamination and bottled water has been provided to the homes. Residents and community leaders believe that the contamination is coming from a landfill in a neighboring community, but MassDEP has not yet made that official determination.

Earlier this month Senator Gobi and the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture conducted an legislative oversight hearing to review the role landfills play in contamination and their future in the Commonwealth, as well as other issues and ideas surrounding solid waste. The Committee heard from experts on both sides of the issue.

Senator Gobi has also filed legislation making the process for landfill contamination more inclusive for abutting communities. Currently they are not able to vote on the expansion of a landfill. Senator Gobi's legislation would give equal votes to the host community and abutting communities.

If you have any questions, please contact Senator Gobi's office at 617-722-1540.

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