



Sale Of Water Supply Board Considered

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The water supply system in Rhode Island may be up for sale.

NBC 10's Bill Rappleye reported that water supply is one of the top issues facing the General Assembly this session.

The state House of Representatives passed a bill Tuesday to create a special commission to study water supply and the potential sale of the Providence water supply system.

The [Providence Water Supply Board](#) owns the Scituate Reservoir along with the treatment plant and the distribution network.

The system is owned by the city of Providence, which is currently assessing how much it is all worth.

The reservoir supplies water to 60 percent of the state, and the water supply board owns 12,000 acres of surrounding land.

"Is it a consolidation? Is it a sale? Is it a lease?" Providence Mayor David Cicilline said. "This is a very valuable asset in the city of Providence that was built by the taxpayers of this city."

The state Senate is also holding hearings on water supply issues.

"We're getting to the point where we're really close to the safety margins on existing water supplies," Sen. Michael Lenihan, R-East Greenwich, said.

Opponents said government should retain control of the water supply.

"We have strong concerns that any attempt to take it out of the public trust would be a threat to the state's ability to manage its future water supply," said Sheila Darmody of the Coalition for Water Security.

The coalition represents more than a dozen environmental groups.

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