



State of Connecticut

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**Testimony of
Representative Jack Hennessy to the
Legislative Energy and Technology Committee
In support of Raised Bill 118 AAC Environmental Justice
February 26, 2008**

Good Afternoon Senator Fonfara, Representative Fontana and members of the Energy and Technology Committee, my name is Jack Hennessy. I proudly represent the residents of the 127th district in Bridgeport. I am testifying in support of Raised Bill 118, An Act Concerning Environmental Justice. The language of the bill that is before you is not the language that we would like for you to vote on, as I would like to work with your co-chairs, advocates, and the state agencies to make the bill more specific as to how to accomplish our goals. I urge the committee to pass this legislation.

In my community, as in many urban communities, there is a high concentration of polluting industries. But this issue is not unique to Bridgeport, or even to urban communities. There are almost 70 towns that have neighborhoods with 3 or more significant sources of pollution. Your town may very well be among them.

This bill addresses the needs of suburban and urban communities throughout the state that are overburdened with polluting facilities and the health problems associated with high levels of pollution.

The bill will, if passed into law accomplish 4 things:

1. Create a process whereby if an additional polluting facility wishes to move into a community with three or more polluting plants within a mile of each other, there

would have to be enhanced notification of the community and improved community participation.

2. Allow for the provision of environmental benefits in environmentally stressed communities.
3. Allow regulatory agencies to take into account the effects of current polluting facilities in a particular community when considering granting permits for new or expanded facilities in that community.
4. Allow DEP to enhance its enforcement of current regulations in these environmentally stressed communities.

Thank you for your consideration of the needs of environmentally stressed communities.

“Environmentally stressed” census block groups are defined as census block groups that have 3 or more “Environmental Affecting Facilities” located within a one mile radius or 2 facilities and a highway within one-half mile of each other. Environmental Affecting Facilities include the following:

1. Power plants
2. Trash or sewage sludge incinerators
3. Large sewage treatment plants
4. Trash transfer facilities
5. Active landfills
6. Multi-town recycling facilities
7. Asphalt or concrete plants
8. Major sources of air pollution as defined by U.S. EPA
9. Air toxic sources listed on the federal Toxic Release Inventory (TRI)

This bill should not prohibit any facilities; only allow more scrutiny by these state agencies and communities when siting and regulating these facilities in environmentally stressed communities.

This bill will provide benefits to business, to towns, to the environment and to public health by preserving and enhancing the environment, health, property values, and the quality of life for community residents and therefore attracting new customers and new businesses to town.