

CBIA

The Connecticut Business & Industry Association

TESTIMONY OF
ERIC J. BROWN, ASSOCIATE COUNSEL
CONNECTICUT BUSINESS & INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
BEFORE THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
MARCH 4, 2009

Good morning. My name is Eric Brown and I serve as associate counsel with the Connecticut Business & Industry Association (CBIA). CBIA represents nearly 10,000 businesses of all types and sizes throughout Connecticut. Nearly 90 percent of our members are small businesses having fewer than 50 employees.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comment on two bills before you today:

S.B. No. 794 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE REGIONAL GREENHOUSE GAS INITIATIVE AND ELECTRIC RATEPAYER RELIEF. –
CBIA strongly supports this bill.

and

S.B. No. 1019 (RAISED) AN ACT REQUIRING BIODIESEL-BLENDED HEATING OIL AND DIESEL FUEL.
CBIA opposes this bill.

S.B. No. 794 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE REGIONAL GREENHOUSE GAS INITIATIVE AND ELECTRIC RATEPAYER RELIEF.

CBIA strongly supports this bill.

Last summer, regulations were promulgated in Connecticut that included some prudent provisions for ratepayer protections in the event that the open-auctioning of carbon allowances through the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative were to lead to excessive cost impacts on residential and business energy consumers. This measure was adopted despite objections from opponents that the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) lacked the authority to promulgate such a proposal.

Passage of SB-794 would therefore verifying DEP's authority and help insure the state avoids a likely legal challenge in the future from the environmental community should the current ratepayer protections provisions ever be implemented.

S.B. No. 1019 (RAISED) AN ACT REQUIRING BIODIESEL-BLENDED HEATING OIL AND DIESEL FUEL.

CBIA opposes this bill in its current form.

This bill would create a mandate for new fuel mixture requirements in Connecticut. CBIA is supportive of the state working to diversify our fuel sources. However, given some important conditions in the marketplace, enacting this mandate would only make Connecticut an even more expensive state with respect to energy costs. CBIA recommends the committee work with fuel producers and distributors to determine if less proscriptive language can be developed for this bill that will not pose as great an economic risk as the current proposal.