



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



Public Hearing – March 4, 2009
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Gina McCarthy
Department of Environment Protection

**Senate Bill No. 1019, AN ACT REQUIRING BIODIESEL BLENDED HEATING OIL
AND DIESEL FUEL**

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Senate Bill No. SB 1019 - AN ACT REQUIRING BIODIESEL BLENDED HEATING OIL AND DIESEL FUEL. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) strongly believes that reducing fossil fuel consumption and the air emissions associated with burning diesel fuel is a worthy and cost effective multi-pollutant reduction strategy. As discussed further below, DEP sees an opportunity to leverage the benefits of this proposal by incorporating diesel fuel sulfur content reductions with the biodiesel blending requirements.

Reducing diesel emissions is a DEP priority and we continue to move forward with a multi-faceted reduction strategy that includes mobile and stationary source applications because:

- Diesel exhaust is a significant contributor to air pollution and has been classified as a probable human carcinogen by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Diesel engines emit high levels of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and particulate matter (PM), and in addition, a complex mixture of gases many of which are known or suspected cancer causing agents. Diesel exhaust causes inflammation of the airways and exacerbates asthma.
- Emissions from diesel powered electricity generators used to meet peak energy demand usually occur on high ozone days, exacerbating the air quality problem. The entire state fails to meet federal ozone standards, obligating the state to develop more strategies to reduce ozone precursor emissions.

Diesel exhaust is an important contributor to airborne concentrations of fine particle pollution, especially in urban areas. Given the nature of emissions from burning diesel fuel, whether burned to provide residential heating, to fuel electric generation or to create industrial sources of heat or power, DEP sees cleaner fuel oil standards as a strategic and cost effective approach to addressing numerous air quality problems.

The General Assembly has an opportunity to leverage the public health, air quality and climate benefits by reformulating this proposal to lower the sulfur content of heating oil. In developing a heating oil and diesel strategy, it is important to understand the regional nature of fuels. Public Act 08-98 directed the DEP to participate in the regional effort to develop a low carbon fuel standard. This regional effort is ongoing, but DEP believes that new fuel requirements should be designed to further current regional efforts at developing a low carbon fuel standard and lower sulfur fuels in order to further protect public health, advance our air quality and climate change goals. The two approaches are entirely compatible and should be pursued to provide multiple benefits to Connecticut citizens.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact Robert LaFrance at 424-3401.