



Connecticut Farm Bureau Association
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Testimony in Opposition to the following Bill:

Raised Bill No. 6616 AN ACT ESTABLISHING WOOD SMOKE TO BE A PUBLIC NUISANCE

Submitted by: Steven K. Reviczky, Executive Director, Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

The following testimony is submitted on behalf of the Connecticut Farm Bureau, a statewide nonprofit membership organization of nearly 5,000 families dedicated to farmers and the future of Connecticut agriculture.

Senator Harriss, Representative Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee:

Connecticut Farm Bureau strongly supports the use of alternative fuels and is concerned that declaring wood smoke a public nuisance in the Public Health Code will undoubtedly and ultimately result in barring some Connecticut resident's use of a readily available renewable resource to heat homes, hot water and places of business. The bill seems to use a sledgehammer where perhaps a scalpel may be needed.

The recent record high fuel costs experienced last year had an extreme and detrimental impact on the agricultural community, which relies heavily on fuel for all aspects of agricultural production. Heating and energy dramatically affect costs for products such as hay, feed, grain, bedding, seed and fertilizer and most farmers faced fuel surcharges applied to deliveries of these commodities. Farmers are actively seeking alternatives to reduce their fuel costs and expenditures. One area where alternatives are available is in the heating of farm residences, outbuildings, workshops, greenhouses and hot water such as systems associated with the daily cleaning of milking equipment. Frankly, Connecticut farmers need to look no further than their farm woodlot and the trees that encroach on their fields for this alternative heating source.

Wood heat is a viable fuel alternative in many agricultural applications. Farmers use a wide variety of wood heating units such as wood stoves and both indoor and outdoor wood furnaces. Farmers are continually removing woody material that encroaches on their fields and hedgerows as well as having an endless supply of fuel wood to be derived from their farm woodlots. Farms often have enough open land around their buildings and greenhouses to meet the setbacks required under state statute for units such as outdoor wood furnaces as well as other units used for wood heat.

Wood is a renewable resource, growing in abundance in Connecticut. Wood heat is a valuable alternative to fossil fuels both for Connecticut farmers and all citizens of Connecticut. In these economic times it is important that the legislature support the use of alternative fuels for Connecticut citizens. The current and foreseeable fuel situation requires that farmers seek alternatives to rising operating expenses as do all citizens in the state of Connecticut.

Public Nuisances

19-13-B1. Conditions specifically declared to constitute public nuisances

The following conditions are specifically declared to constitute public nuisances:

- (a) Bakeries, restaurants and other places where food is prepared or served that are not kept in a clean and sanitary condition; or in which persons who have any communicable disease are employed; or for which suitable toilet facilities are not provided; or in which there is evidence that rats, mice or vermin are present.
- (b) Spoiled or diseased meats, whether exposed and offered for sale or being transported or kept for sale.
- (c) Barns or stables, hogpens, chicken yards or manure piles or accumulations of organic material so maintained as to be a breeding place for flies.
- (d) The discharge or exposure of sewage, garbage or any other organic filth into or on any public place in such a way that transmission of infective material may result thereby.
- (e) Privies not screened against flies in populous districts and privies likely to pollute the ground or surface water from which water supply is obtained.
- (f) Transportation of garbage, night soil or other organic filth except in tight, covered wagons which prevent leakage or access of flies.
- (g) Stagnant water likely to afford breeding places for mosquitoes within a residential district or within a distance of one thousand feet there from.
- (h) Bone boiling, fat rendering establishments, or tallow or soap works, or other trades, when they can be shown to affect public health or produce serious offense.
- (i) Buildings or any part thereof which are in a dilapidated or filthy condition which may endanger the life or health of persons living in the vicinity.