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**Testimony of Joseph Campisi
Director of Environmental Affairs
Drake Petroleum
December 9, 2009**

Drake Petroleum has been an ongoing concern in Connecticut for over 50 years and currently operates over 50 gas stations/convenience stores in the State of Connecticut. Drake has been proactive handling environmental assessment and remediation of petroleum releases, and our ability to continue with this stance would be materially impacted by the sharp reduction in the Tank Program/Fund proposed on line 16 of the Governors November Deficit Mitigation Plan. Specifically, Drake Petroleum is moving forward with investigation and cleanup of over 30 stations at both existing and formerly owned properties in Connecticut. Drake will be spending in excess of \$10 million to cleanup these stations over the next 3 to 4 years, and our budgets have been established based on the assumption that reimbursement from the Tank Program/Fund will continue. During the past several years Drake has received approximately 65% reimbursement for all cleanup costs at these stations.

The deep cuts proposed in line 16 of the Governors Deficit Mitigation Plan would have a very negative impact on Drake's priorities moving forward and this impact would likewise result in fewer cleanups over the next several years. The other retail petroleum firms operating in Connecticut would be similarly impacted resulting in potentially hundreds of sites across Connecticut remaining in a state of flux. Therefore this drastic cut in funding would negatively impact the state's priorities to cleanup sites that could impact human health and the environment. In addition, less spending on LUST cleanups would result in more abandoned properties and more blight within the towns and villages in Connecticut.

Drake is hopeful that the State of Connecticut will reconsider the current level of funding for the Tank Program/Fund and will reinstate much of the proposed cuts. Although Drake will continue to be a good corporate citizen and meet its environmental responsibilities, it will be impossible to move ahead with our current aggressive plans for LUST cleanups given the dramatic cuts the Administration is proposing. We simply ask that the State of Connecticut direct more of the motor fuels tax receipts to the originally intended target; cleanup of LUST sites. We certainly understand that the State must make some difficult choices due to the current fiscal crisis, but we believe that the current proposal to fund at the \$3.5 million level for this next fiscal year would be damaging to our cleanup program as well as those of other retail petroleum firms. If the current level of appropriations is passed by the Legislature we believe that this could result in decertification of the Tank Fund by the USEPA, which could have long term disastrous results for the State of Connecticut.