

December 9, 2009

Co-Chair Toni Harp
Co-Chair John Geragosian
Senator Dan DeBicella
Representative Craig Miner

Appropriations Committee Members:

My name is Abner Burgos-Rodriguez, I work for a family owned gasoline and heating oil marketer located in Bridgeport. I am here today opposing the proposed cut on line 16 of the Governors November Deficit Mitigation Plan as it pertains to the Tank Program administered by DEP.

to The Tank Fund/Program ensures that leaking underground storage tanks are addressed to prevent contamination of ground water. The revenues' from the Gross Earnings Tax (GET) used to fund the Tank Fund/Program are more than ample to maintain the current funding level of this program. In fact, over the last six years this programs funding has been cut by almost 60% with the most recent cut coming last session. Further cuts threaten the Tank Program's Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) certification. That means that the hundreds of Connecticut businesses (most of which are mom and pop's) that rely on the Tank Fund/Program to meet EPA's requirements would be out of compliance resulting in potential gas station closings, increased cost of gasoline and loss of jobs. Not to mention that several contaminated properties would go un-remediated.

The Tank Program/Fund is an investment that returns good jobs, competitive gas prices, tax revenue and a clean environment. The cuts proposed in line 16 in the Governors November Deficit Mitigation Plan threaten all of the good that the Tank Fund/Program has provided Connecticut's economy, environment and citizens.

I am well aware of the tremendous challenges you face in deciding where to make adjustments to the State's budget. The gasoline industry has been a part of the budget solution and not the problems that the state faces. The taxes the industry pays exceed the amount allocated to cleanup contaminated property by nearly \$400 million. Please let us not adopt short term solutions that have long term ramifications that will hurt the environment, consumers and local businesses.

I ask that you reject line 16 of the Governors November Deficit Mitigation Plan.

If you have any questions I would be happy to address them.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Abner Burgos-Rodriguez
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