

December 9, 2009

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

Appropriations Committee Members:

My name is Brent Coscia, 428 Main Street West Haven, CT, 06516 and I work for a local family business owned and operated by a 3rd generation Connecticut businessman, who operates several gasoline stations throughout the state. My company is Consumers Petroleum, located at 204 Spring Hill Rd. Trumbull, CT, 06611. I am here to urge your rejection of line 16 of the Governors November Deficit Mitigation Plan as it pertains to the Commercial Tank Fund/Program.

The statement that I am about to make concerns the price of gasoline, employment of thousands of Connecticut residents, the environment, tax revenue and hundreds of local businesses. **THE GASOLINE BUSINESS IN THE STATE OF CT. IS ON THE VERGE OF GOING OUT OF BUSINESS BECAUSE OF THE CUTS TO THE UNDER GROUND STORAGE TANK FUND.**

This statement is not hyperbole or some type of threat it is a fact. The federal government will step in and say that our Tank Fund/Program is not a viable program since there is not enough money to keep it going. Since the inception of the Tank Fund/Program till today the fund has been cut 75% and now you are asking us to take another cut of another 30%. Let me tell you what will happen. The tank owners of this state, which 75% are small family businesses will have to try to get private insurance if they can afford it. It will mean environmental testing for a phase 1 and 2 that will runs thousands of dollars, no coverage for any existing pollution, and more court cases that you can count anytime someone actually tries to put in a claim.

Also please keep in mind that between 1985-1988 all the underground tanks in the state were removed and new ones put in. Since the tank life is only 30 years, between 2015-2018 starting just 5 short years from now all those tanks will need to be replaced. The cost of a new tank job with all the environmental changes that have been mandated will run between \$175,000 to \$300,000 and that is not counting any remediation for pollution. Without this tank fund program being funded at the proper levels, very little pollution will be cleaned up and most small businesses will forced to close. After that

the only ones left will be the bigger multinational companies which will then control the market. We all know that when competition goes away prices go up since there is no one to help keep them down since there will be no small business men left to compete. This situation serves no one while harming businesses, tax revenue, motorists, jobs and the environment.

We all know how tough the economic times are and that the underground storage Tank Fund/Program is not as visible as helping those in need, providing for better education and other important programs. What we do know is that this issue will affect each and every district as there are gasoline stations in most every town in the state.

I urge you in the strongest terms possible to please consider the long term implications of this proposed cut, as I am sure that being the responsible people you are you don't want to create bigger problems that you can not fix at a later date.

Please reject line 16 Governors November Deficit Mitigation Plan to the Tank Fund/Program so that we can keep it viable and then come February we have to do something to prop up this program for the long term. The Gross Earnings Tax, which has taken in hundreds of millions of dollars, has been raided over the years for the general fund so that other programs can be supported. All we are asking is to keep the tank fund which pays for itself at least 5k times more each year viable and not cut any more money from it.

Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Respectfully,

Brent Coscia
Consumers Petroleum
Business Development Manager
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