

where the months of June to July bring incessant humidity, it is easy to dry clothes outdoors in Connecticut all 12 months of the year. My family of four has not used an electric clothes dryer for over 10 years, the clothes dry as well in February as they do in the dry weather of August or September.

Clotheslines are needlessly banned in Middletown:

Currently several Middletown Homeowner's Associations effectively ban clotheslines and drying racks. The Old Farms Neighborhood policy is, "Clothes lines and drying racks shall be screened or so located as not to be visible from any point on adjacent Lots." Wesleyan Hills has an even more restrictive policy: "Clotheslines must be in rear yards and screened from the view of other properties, the public streets, and common open space. Clotheslines are seasonal can be put up April 1 and must be removed by October 31." Very few houses in either neighborhood are so completely screened from all neighboring properties that nobody else could ever see a clothesline. Those policies thus effectively ban the use of low-cost solar and wind energy to dry clothing.

Increased use of clotheslines would benefit Middletown:

The bans on clotheslines by homeowners associations are based on a spurious claim that property values would be decreased if neighbors used solar and wind power to dry their clothes. Presumably, this is based on the idea that potential property buyers would take their money to neighborhoods not under "risk" of having clotheslines. Passage of Bill No. 5995 would immediately and forever eliminate that spurious claim.



Outdoor clotheslines do more than just provide a free and clean way to dry clothes, they promote health and community. In Middletown and other towns across our state, some neighborhoods have developed in ways that remove residents from view. The frequency of seeing somebody around the house has decreased. A visible clothesline can restore neighborhood vitality. When the weather breaks and the laundry comes out, the profusion of colors is like a blossoming of flowers swaying in the breeze, adding color and humanity to the neighborhood.

Please support Committee Bill No. 5995, the Right to Dry Act:

For reasons of human health, animal protection, farm viability, and community health, I urge you to support this cost-free environmental measure. For all the talk of high tech "green" commerce, the perfect solar-powered machines of the modern era are not yet ready for sale. Fortunately, the clothesline is a solar powered clothes dryer that works and is free. End the anachronistic ban against this method of drying clothes. In today's times of increasingly dire economic news, allow people of all incomes to enjoy the benefit of drying their clothes for free. Allow our communities to benefit from the reduction in pollution.

**To the Committee on Energy and Technology:**

My name is Stephen H. Devoto, of Middletown. I am here in two capacities to speak to you about Committee Bill No. 5995, the Right to Dry Act. I would like to speak first as a professional Biologist, I am an Associate Professor of Biology at Wesleyan University, with a Ph.D. in Biology from The Rockefeller University. I have a very active, research program in Biology at Wesleyan, funded by the National Institutes of Health. I would like to speak to the environmental benefits of allowing the widespread use of clotheslines in our state. Those benefits result from replacing the fossil fuel based electrical energy used to power dryers with the solar and wind power of a clothesline. I will then speak as a Middletown resident, about the benefits to me and to Middletown of passing this bill.

Past efforts to reduce emissions:

I moved to Connecticut in 1997, and one of the first political storms that I witnessed was the onset of a vigorous campaign to clean up dirty power plants in Connecticut. I remember reports of over-flow rooms at the Capitol for public hearings. You passed laws that reduced emissions at power plants by 85% at the Sooty Six power plants (Bridgeport, Middletown, Montville, Milford, New Haven, and Norwalk). Your action led directly to cleaner air; you have literally saved lives in our state. You have stopped some of the sulfur dioxide from entering our soils and plants, and from making our rain more acidic. This has preserved crop yields. More recently, in 2005 Middletown entered into a Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative with other Northeast states to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. These initiatives were opposed by utilities and by some advocates for the poor, who felt that the environmental savings would come at a cost to ratepayers.

Clotheslines as a free ride for reducing emissions:

What is striking about the measure before you now is that it carries NO COSTS! And yet, it has the potential to have an even more dramatic effect on the air quality of our state than the RGGI and Sooty Six legislation combined. Dryers account for 6% of domestic energy use, if everyone in Connecticut used clotheslines, we could not just reduce pollution from some of our power plants, we could actually completely eliminate the pollution and even the Carbon dioxide emitted from one or more of them. AT NO COST! As a biologist, I can vouch that such a reduction will benefit the health of not only the children and families of our state, but also the plants and animals, both wild and farmed.

Clotheslines are effective in Connecticut:

Connecticut does not have a bad season for drying clothes. Unlike California, where the months of January to April bring incessant rain, or the Southeastern states,