

**Testimony of the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority,  
Before the Program Review & Investigations Committee  
Re: SB 267 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF  
THE PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE  
CONCERNING THE ROLE AND PURPOSE OF THE CONNECTICUT  
RESOURCES RECOVERY AUTHORITY  
March 8, 2010**

Good afternoon, Senator Kissel, Representative Mushinsky and members of the Program Review and Investigations Committee. My name is Tom Kirk and I am the President of the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority and we thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding SB 267, AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE ROLE AND PURPOSE OF THE CONNECTICUT RESOURCES RECOVERY AUTHORITY.

As we have stated in our testimony when the draft report was issued, the state's solid waste management system is currently in the midst of transitioning from a publicly-owned trash-to-energy system with direct public control to a system where some of the trash-to-energy facilities are privately controlled and the public controls a portion of the plants' processing capacity. The reason those facilities became privately owned is not because CRRA desired that outcome but because trash-to-energy contracts signed more than twenty years ago required it. Fortunately, CRRA's Mid-Connecticut Project Trash-to-Energy facility located here in Hartford, the state owned transfer stations and the state owned recycling facilities were not subject to such a contract. They will remain publicly owned and publicly controlled to benefit the people of our state long into the future.

CRRA presently has implementation responsibility for the State Solid Waste Management Plan and we believe CRRA remains the agency best suited and most capable for this mission. Without a central statewide entity such as the Authority, any efforts try to continue to move the state forward in terms of recycling and other solid waste initiatives will happen as they had prior to CRRA's involvement, piecemeal at best or, most likely, not occur at all. The authority's expertise in planning, constructing, operating and financing large-scale regional solid waste facilities is critical to ensuring the state has all of the necessary solid waste and recycling capacity functions. Please note that CRRA performs these services without any state funding. CRRA is fully self-supported.

CRRA and it Mid-Connecticut Project have recovered from the Enron debacle and has kept its disposal fees reasonable, stable and low. The Mid-Connecticut Project towns are not charged for their recyclables as in other projects and have, in fact, provided rebates to towns of \$10 per ton for every ton of recyclables they deliver. We have also been in the forefront of electronics recycling collecting more than two million pounds of obsolete electronics for recycling from towns and their residents. We also educate more than 50,000 people, mostly school age children, at our two museums and educational facilities located in Hartford and Stratford where we teach "reduce, re-use and recycle and recover".

We continue to move recycling into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with single-stream recycling and have worked with our towns and their haulers to implement, most notably the City of Hartford, which has seen tremendous success with single-stream recycling.

We are looking forward to providing the Mid-Connecticut Project towns the best, lowest cost disposal and recycling options in 2013 when the current town contracts expire and are in the process of preparing draft agreements for those towns to consider in the coming months.

A recent OLR report, entitled "Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority: Responsibilities, Liabilities, and Other Issues," points out that giving CRRA's responsibilities to other entities would be extremely problematic for several reasons. Transferring CRRA's responsibilities to other agencies such as DEP, DPUC or the Treasurer's Office would require those agencies to perform conflicting roles and goals.

With private control increasing over the limited amount of trash-to-energy and disposal capacity available and no landfills in Connecticut, the state is in danger of surrendering price control and disposal access to one or two private out of state owners. Consequently, this near monopoly will be able to charge as high a price as the town and citizens can bear in this supply constrained market.

Should this proposed task force pass the General Assembly, CRRA would look forward to providing its expertise and insights. I would be happy to try to answer any questions.