



Joan McDonald
Commissioner



State of Connecticut
Department of Economic and
Community Development

***TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
March 1, 2010***

*Joan McDonald, Commissioner
Department of Economic and Community Development*

***HB 5121 AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL
JUSTICE COMMUNITY STATUTE.***

The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) strongly **opposes** House Bill 5121 AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY STATUTE. DECD believes that this bill would be extremely burdensome and should not apply to the department for the following reasons.

DECD does not issue certificates under chapter 277a (CT Siting Council), new or expanded permit or siting approvals and these actions do not fall within DECD's jurisdiction.

Presently, any projects that potentially impact the environment already have a thorough review and public comment process through the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA). Any additional duplicative requirements would prove burdensome and costly to both the state and the department's clientele, while serving no useful purpose.

DECD also does not typically get involved with those activities listed as an "affecting facility"; the only exception would be a factory requiring an air quality permit.

DECD would also like to raise other concerns as to how this bill is written, since there is no timeframe or reasonableness phrasing to the negotiations.

We recognize that environmental justice is important. However, the state is already faced with a difficult economic climate in which to do business, so we need to be sure that there is a balance, HB 5121 seeks to erode any balance and we **urge its rejection**.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.