



Connecticut Farm Bureau Association
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March 8, 2010

Testimony in Opposition to:

Raised Bill No. 126: AN ACT ADDING WOOD SMOKE TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH NUISANCE CODE AND CONCERNING OUTDOOR WOOD-BURNING FURNACES

Submitted by: Steven K. Reviczky, Executive Director, Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

The following testimony is submitted on behalf of the Connecticut Farm Bureau, a statewide nonprofit membership organization of over 5,000 families dedicated to farming and the future of Connecticut agriculture.

Senator Edward Meyer, Representative Richard Roy and members of the Environment Committee:

Connecticut Farm Bureau strongly supports the use of alternative fuels and is opposed to declaring wood smoke a public nuisance in the Public Health Code as proposed in SB 126. The inclusion of wood smoke as a public nuisance under the health code will undoubtedly and ultimately result in barring some Connecticut resident's use of a readily available renewable resource to heat homes, hot water and places of business. Declaring wood smoke a public nuisance will inevitably have a negative impact on agricultural production ranging from the heating greenhouses to the boiling of sap to make maple syrup.

Wood heat has long been a viable fuel alternative to fossil fuels for Connecticut citizens. Farmers, as well as thousands of Connecticut residents, use a wide variety of wood heating units such as wood stoves and both indoor and outdoor wood furnaces to heat their homes and businesses. Farmers are continually removing woody material that encroaches on their fields and hedgerows and have a continuing supply of fuel wood to be derived from farm woodlots. Wood is a renewable resource, growing in abundance in Connecticut. The vast majority of fuel wood that is utilized in the heating of Connecticut homes and farmsteads is removed under a silvicultural prescription to improve the health of Connecticut's forest lands.

In 2005, the Legislature enacted Public Act 05-227 An Act Concerning Clean Air Strategies, which regulates the location, stack height, usage of outdoor wood furnaces and enforcement by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and local municipalities. There are many locations in rural Connecticut where outdoor wood furnaces may be installed in compliance with PA 05-227. In addition, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is working with manufacturers to enact mandatory emissions standards for outdoor wood furnaces by 2011, to which reference is made in CGS Sec. 22a-174k (b). Connecticut Farm Bureau Association urges the legislature to allow the continued usage of outdoor wood furnaces in accordance with PA 05-227 and consider the efforts being made on the part of the U.S. EPA to address emissions standards that are to be released in the near future. Does it make any economic sense to transport fuel half way around the world when Connecticut is rich with an abundant fuel supply of wood literally in our own backyards? In these difficult economic times, it is more important that the legislature support the use of renewable alternative fuels for Connecticut citizens.

Connecticut Farm Bureau Association - *The Voice of Connecticut Agriculture*

Conditions specifically declared to constitute public nuisances

Public Nuisances

19-13-B1. Conditions specifically declared to constitute public nuisances

The following conditions are specifically declared to constitute public nuisances:

- (a) Bakeries, restaurants and other places where food is prepared or served that are not kept in a clean and sanitary condition; or in which persons who have any communicable disease are employed; or for which suitable toilet facilities are not provided; or in which there is evidence that rats, mice or vermin are present.
- (b) Spoiled or diseased meats, whether exposed and offered for sale or being transported or kept for sale.
- (c) Barns or stables, hogpens, chicken yards or manure piles or accumulations of organic material so maintained as to be a breeding place for flies.
- (d) The discharge or exposure of sewage, garbage or any other organic filth into or on any public place in such a way that transmission of infective material may result thereby.
- (e) Privies not screened against flies in populous districts and privies likely to pollute the ground or surface water from which water supply is obtained.
- (f) Transportation of garbage, night soil or other organic filth except in tight, covered wagons which prevent leakage or access of flies.
- (g) Stagnant water likely to afford breeding places for mosquitoes within a residential district or within a distance of one thousand feet there from.
- (h) Bone boiling, fat rendering establishments, or tallow or soap works, or other trades, when they can be shown to affect public health or produce serious offense.
- (i) Buildings or any part thereof which are in a dilapidated or filthy condition which may endanger the life or health of persons living in the vicinity.