

Testimony for Public Hearing before the Environment Committee  
Monday, March 7, Room 1A.

I am **Martha Kelly**, a member of the Recycling Speakers Bureau of the **Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice**. This is a group that works on protecting urban residents from health problems caused by pollution. CCEJ is a partner in the **Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut**.

I am a resident of Hartford at **57 Curtiss St, Hartford, 06106**, and I speak **in favor of SB 205**.

**SB 205 - AN ACT REQUIRING CERTAIN THERMOSTAT MANUFACTURERS TO PAY INCENTIVES FOR THE RETURN OF MERCURY THERMOSTATS**

*Thank you, Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, and members of the Environment Committee for giving us this opportunity to address you. .*

*I am very concerned about the need for additional safeguards to ensure that our air and water are not poisoned with mercury.*

*Mercury is a potent toxic material which is well known to cause neurological damage. Just one gram is enough to poison all the fish in a 20 acre lake. An otherwise healthy source of food, fish, is becoming too dangerous for pregnant women to eat. And mercury bio accumulates in the environment, migrating on air streams to distant places like the Arctic.*

*As a grandmother and someone who fishes for pleasure and for food, I am concerned about this issue. As an individual with arthritis and other health conditions for which omega 6 fatty acids are an important aid, I am concerned that these sources of therapeutic nutrition not be tainted by a neurotoxin.*

*Mercury Free Thermostat's are readily available at low cost, but if we replace the old thermostat without properly handling the mercury contained in them we may be poisoning ourselves and our children.*

*Other states have taken action on this issue, including Maine.*

*The Maine DEP has taken action on this issue:*

*<http://www.maine.gov/dep/mercury/waste.htm>*

*Despite the actions taken in the past ten years to remove mercury from new thermostats in our homes and to require labeling on newer thermostats, many thousands of mercury containing thermostats remain in use here in Connecticut.*

*These thermostats can be in service for many years. In the home I owned in Bloomfield, I had one thermostat, in use between 1974 and 2004, until I sold the home. I would guess that it was manufactured in the 1960's or earlier (my home also had a furnace that was originally fired by coal, then upgraded to oil and later to natural gas).*

*I have a thermostat in my current apartment that has been there for many years. I can guarantee you that if this were to be replaced, my landlord's handyman would simply discard the old thermostat into the municipal solid waste processed by the city of Hartford at the Mid-Connecticut Project of CRRA, i.e. in the incinerator.*

*Since the programs created in the early part of the last decade have not succeeded in removing this ongoing threat to the public health, I ask that you take action to improve on the approaches that were instituted then.*

*Thank you,*

*Martha Kelly*