

Dear members of the Environmental Committee:

My name is Karen Bradley and I strongly oppose raised bill no. 830, the banning of outdoor wood furnaces. I am here representing two different roles; one as a mother of two small children and two as an owner of a now struggling small business in this state.

My husband and I purchased an OWF for our home and opened an alternative heating business in this state more than 14 years ago. We did this in an attempt to save money and in some small way do our part to give our community options to lessen "our" dependence on oil. In these 14 years we have sadly watched as others struggled when the price of oil rose to over \$4.00 a gallon, as we saved over \$40,000 for our family, putting that money aside for our son's college.

I am angered by the constant attacks made against Outdoor wood furnaces, by anti-wood groups who feed our local gov't and press with misinformation. They will adamantly state that these units are "dangerous" to your health and that they spew noxious smoke 24 hours a day. These claims are absolutely false.

I am a mother of 2 boys, ages 7 and 9 and believe me, my children are my #1 concern. I pride myself on being an excellent mother who will do everything in my power to raise my children in a healthy and safe environment. I am educated, extremely responsible and very concerned about the environment and my children's future. Our OWF has never caused harm to my family and does NOT spew noxious smoke 24/7. My children were raised with an OWF 125' from our home. They do not suffer from any form of asthma, allergies or on-going upper respiratory illnesses. They are athletic, smart and as healthy as can be. We also have no reports of OWF's causing harm to our business's 1500 plus customers who own them.

When I hear claims that these units are dangerous and should be "banned" and that we should turn to a "cleaner and safer" means of heating our home, I am appalled. I don't know of any OWF that has caused serious harm. I wish I could say the same for the alternatives! I guess I can heat my home with Propane, however I know that gas leaks & explosions can occur and that there are serious risks of carbon monoxide poisoning. There is the chance that we may not wake up in the morning. I can switch to natural gas? Well, not in rural NE CT. It isn't available where I live and I would much prefer to raise my boys next to an OWF than a Kleen Energy Plant that suffered dangerous explosions killing those in it's vicinity. Not to mention the enormous amount of "black smoke" that is belched into the environment, that we've all seen on the news, during purging events. We can turn to indoor wood burning and put my family at the risk of devastating and deadly house fires. Or, I can turn back to oil and be a slave to unpredictable fuel costs. I can teach my children to not live off the land in which they reside. We can teach them to purchase the oil that fuels global conflict, wars and terrorism and we can add to the horrific incidences of oil spills that destroy our ocean's wildlife.

I believe I have the right to choose what I feel is the "safest and most responsible" of the options available to me. I believe that OWF's are less dangerous to the health of our citizens and our environment than the other options. I also feel it's a great learning experience for our children who are growing up in this oil dependent and economically struggling society. I believe in teaching our boys how to hunt, fish, grow food and heat our home off our "land". If we suffer a natural disaster in CT or more likely we lose our business due to the financial devastation of banning outdoor wood furnaces, guess what, my family and my children will know how to survive on their own without gov't support, as we can provide ourselves with our basic needs off of the property in which we live. I think that's a huge lesson that all children should learn, as opposed to being dependent on our gov't and global oil companies.

What the opponents of OWF's would like to you to believe is that these units are dangerous and the industry is not moving forward with new technology when in fact it has made huge progress. Imagine if we banned all products in the beginning stages and did not allow industries to make advancements in technology. Can you imagine the impact that would have had on where we are today. Right now, as I stand before you, the USEPA is working hand in hand with the OWF industry to continue to improve technologies and are already in the process of regulating "outdoor wood-burning furnaces" at the Federal level by revising the NSPS.

Consider the consequences of banning such a great alternative to our other current heating options. Give the industry the opportunity to continue to make advancements that will aid the people of CT.