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Ladies and Gentlemen of the legislature, citizens and taxpayers.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak about Outdoor Wood Furnaces.

As a residential building inspector for over 20 years, and having worked for several towns in CT, it may be important to realize that an OWF is only one of FIVE types of wood burning appliances, used for heating a residential home.

The (5) types of wood burning appliances are: the fireplace, the wood stove, the pellet stove, wood-&-oil combination hot-air furnace (which also cycles and has a blower), and the outdoor wood furnace.

I can not dispute that wood fires occasionally cause irritating smoke, yet a ban on one (of the five) types of wood fueled appliances is of little benefit, and major harm to a select few people who either manufacture and sell the units, or to the owners of the units.

Indeed in neighborhoods where houses are close together, local controls, and considerate operators, appear to be the logical solution.

My wife and I reside in a house in Middlefield. This is noteworthy, since our house is surrounded by three neighbors, each with a wood burning appliance. The first neighbor has a wood stove in their basement. The second neighbor has a pellet stove with it's exhaust pipe sticking straight out the back of their ranch house, and our third neighbor has an OWF.

..... I guess that makes my wife and I experts - on the nuisance of wood burning appliance smoke (laugh).

..... the important point here, is that we are not scientists or engineers, but we know by experience that when the low-pressure weather cause lingering fog, and stagnant air (like we had yesterday), *we suffer equally from either of OUR 3-neighbors*, depending on the wind direction, or lack of wind- but not on the type of appliance.

Pellet stoves are burning wood chips, with glue. That's probably also bad for our health. Again, we are not experts, just common sense. Wood stoves often burn wet wood, or wood that is decayed or rotted. That stinks, and I am here to testify that my wife & I endure it But my point is this: In low hanging damp weather, regardless of if they burn in an OWF, a wood stove, or a pellet stove, we have to remind ourselves that our neighbors are burning wood to survive, and not for any other reason.

It is their right to survive. If I am inconvenienced by having to close all the windows in our house, I deal with it. What we do not do, is to outlaw our neighbors from using wood heat to survive.

On the matter of cycling on and off, it is true that OWFs cycle. It is ALSO true that pellet stoves cycle on & off, wood-oil combination indoor furnaces – cycle on & off, and these allow the wood to smoulder also, depending on the temperature in the chamber.

So, possibly the solution is not to ban one out of 5 types of wood burning appliances. Maybe the answer is to improve the technology, and give people tax credits to improve their OWF if it is an older unit, or if neighbors complain who do indeed have a hardship.

Older diesel cars & trucks smoked ridiculously years ago. Now, you can hardly tell the new diesel cars run on diesel. Technology does work.

Imagine if lawmakers outlawed diesels, years ago, because diesel vehicles created smoke. Where would we be today, as a nation?

CT public officials, and Federal Officials, constantly claim that America (and Connecticut), need to be less dependent on foreign oil, yet here we are, considering a law to ban a wood burning appliance, the OWF, because it smokes really bad when wet or decayed wood is burned, or when we have a stalled or stagnant weather front.

What are we going to do next, ban pellet stoves? Ban oil-wood indoor furnaces?

Maybe there is a better path. THE proposed ban (#830) will cost thousands of jobs in our local community, and at the same time threaten an individual's right to survival, through heating his or her home with an OWF.

In addition, the ban, if enacted, will leave home owners who already have an OWF, to abandon the unit, after spending several thousand dollars? This just seems too drastic, and too late.

The oil industry is a total scam. Oil comes out of the ground, mostly from the middle east, and yet costs most Americans more per gallon, than milk. Does this make any sense? They fix the price of oil, to the point where our working people are ready to stop going to work, YET we are thinking of outlawing our own citizens, from using a fuel that is renewable, is local, and rewards US citizens who harvest wood, build furnaces and fireplaces, provide transportaton, and many related industries.

I ask you, our respected representatives, to consider using rewards and incentives, to help make OWFs more efficient, and less smokey, instead of outlawing their use, especially while other forms of wood burning appliances are allowed to continue.

Thank you all, for listening.