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## **To the Chairs and Members of the Environment Committee**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 830 – A Bill that would ban outdoor wood furnaces with an exception for farmers and their farm houses.

Toxics Action Center Campaigns is a public health and environmental organization that works side by side with communities to clean up and prevent pollution, while developing long-term citizen leaders for the environmental and social change movements. We have worked for many years with citizens groups across the state to protect public health and the environment by working to clean up hazardous waste sites, curb pesticide spraying, and reduce pollution from dirty and dangerous waste, energy and industrial facilities. Over the last year, we worked with residents in New Haven to reduce pollution at a Sooty Six power plant and also in Franklin to stop a new incinerator ash landfill. I am speaking with you today to encourage your support of Senate Bill No. 830: An Act Prohibiting The Use Of Certain Outdoor Wood-Burning Furnaces.

In passing Senate Bill 830 out of committee you will take a major step toward protecting the health and quality of life for all the Connecticut residents.

According to a fact sheet from the Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management (NESCAUM), the average emission from one outdoor wood-fired furnace is equal to 20 federally certified wood stoves and as many particulates as 50 to 500 diesel trucks, depending on the truck's age and pollution controls. See <http://www.nescaum.org/documents/owbfactsheetfinal.pdf> -

Most outdoor wood furnaces employ very primitive combustion technology. As a result, they emit dense smoke that endangers the health of families and neighbors. The particles of wood smoke are so small that closed doors and windows cannot stop them from entering homes, even energy-efficient, weather-tight homes.

The most obvious impact on public health from poor indoor air quality is asthma. Asthma afflicts about 20 million Americans, including 6.3 million children. Since 1980, the biggest growth in asthma cases has been in children under five. In 2000 there were nearly 2 million emergency room visits and nearly half a million hospitalizations due to asthma, at a cost of almost \$2 billion, and causing 14 million school days missed each year.

At Toxics Action Center we believe that people deserve to have safe places to live, work and play. Because we spend so much of our time inside our homes, the indoor air quality should be safe and healthy. We also believe that government should prevent problems and act out of caution; instead of reacting to problems too late. When toxic technologies like outdoor wood-burning furnaces are already in use, we should act quickly to protect public health.

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection's Web site states that "OWFs produce a lot of thick smoke, which in addition to being a nuisance to neighbors, has serious health and air pollution impacts.

Smoke from OWFs contains unhealthy amounts of particulate matter, dioxin, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, hydrochloric acid, formaldehyde and other toxic air pollutants. Exposure to smoke from an OWF can increase adverse respiratory and cardiovascular symptoms. Exposure to other pollutants listed above is associated with a diverse range of harmful health effects, including asthmatic sensitivity, lung illnesses and cancer."

As evidenced by the growing public support to ban the use of outdoor wood furnaces both in Connecticut by 15 towns, and other states- the science and public opinion is clear.

This bill would protect Connecticut residents by banning the use of this harmful technology. Toxics Action Center Campaigns fully supports Senate Bill 830 and urges the Committee to prohibit the use of outdoor wood-burning furnaces except if such furnaces are used for agricultural or farming purposes or to heat the home of such farmer.

Thank you for your time.

Claire B.W. Miller  
Community Organizer  
Toxics Action Center Campaigns  
Action Center Campaigns