

## Raised Bill No. 830

“The care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only object of good government.” – Thomas Jefferson

Dear Chairman Meyer, Chairman Roy, Vice Chairman Maynard, Vice Chairman Davis and members of the Environment Committee,

My name is Kathryn Noyes-LeBlanc. I live in North Grosvenordale, CT. And I am in strong support of raised bill number 830. For my family, our neighbors OWF continuously smoked out our home and our yard for several years, saturating them with foul chemical odors, leaving my family trapped inside or sometimes forcing us to go for rides until it had cleared from our home. If large smoke outs were occurring in the late hours of the evening, I would go to bed with pounding headaches and forced breathing. I suffered from scaly, burn like rashes on my face; I suffered over and over from intense pounding in my chest; as if a Roman Legion was using a battering ram to break through. I had my sinus tissue swell; completely closing my nostrils, so only pink tissue jammed together was visible while looking up my nose. I had brain fogginess, hearing loss, and anxiety. Anxiety, for my own safety and the safety of those most precious to me, my children, anxiety that brought me to my knees in prayer, over, and over, and over, again.

I had several times asked my neighbor to raise his flue, expressing to him all of these effects and he, each time, had refused.

Our contractors who sided our home in the fall of 2009 worked several weeks sometimes with their faces wrapped in sweatshirts, demanding me to call the fire department, police department and other officials, because they were concerned for the health and safety of my own family and had a right to earn their living without harm to their bodies. These contractors not only experienced the intense pollution of these machines but saw my neighbor putting painted wood into their OWF, and DEP e-mails regarding my neighbors admitting to burning painted wood in the past and subsequent findings of “painted wood, stained wood, polyurethaned wood/furniture, and laminated lumber”, leaves us wondering what additional hazards we had already inhaled over the last three winters.

After hundreds of hours of reaching out to officials, reporting for half a year to the DEP that this OWF was installed illegally, and continuously reporting smoke and odors filling our yard and home, the only relief came when a DEP official looked inside our neighbors OWF while the local fire department had it open, inspecting what they were burning because the smoke had enveloped the entire neighborhood, and saw the manufacturing date was truly past the 2005 law and our neighbor was then, after years of pollution from both clean and unclean wood, forging false receipts, and lying to officials, our neighbor was shut down and forced to move it 200’ away and raise his flue above our home. I shudder to think if this could not have been proved or if they had truly installed it before July of 2005. After moving the machine and raising the flue, they began running it again this past November and still today we can smell the chemical odor while this OWF is burning, especially when the wind is blowing North West. You can smell

this odor in many neighborhoods that an OWF is being used. It is not a wood burning smell but has a chemical odor that I can not identify. We have been thankful for the almost year of relief from this machine and once again worry about the effects this pollution is going to have on our family now and over the long term. I can not imagine the terror of needing nebulizers on a daily bases for my children's survival, as some victims I have met are enduring. I am grateful for this small momentary mercy that fate has given my family, and prepare for what new movements I can make to ensure my children can breathe clean air once again.

It strikes me that the average human body breathes about 12,000 liters of air per day. When pollution rapes the air of her natural ability to give life, and every breathe you take depletes, rather than replenishes that life force, when it is disabling your bodies powerful ability to heal and cleanse itself; that is not freedom, that is injustice.

When silently we are robbed of our God given right to thrive, an injustice is being done. When families are violated everyday by odors and smoke, that against the bodies natural instinct, is forced in, by necessity of breathe, allowed to poison and choke any creature; that is injustice.

"No man has the natural right to commit aggression on the equal rights of another, and this is all from which the laws ought to restrain him.", again Thomas Jefferson.

I do not need to remind you why these machines create more pollution than other wood burning machines, of their faulty technology and inability to fully combust, of the distance these pollutants are carried, the gases, the carcinogens, the toxins, or of the effects these pollutants have within a human lung, young or old, within any living creature and its tissues, within our soil, within the foods we then consume. These are all arithmetic equations,  $1+1$  is  $2$ . We are educated by the experts as to what these machines are producing.

I will remind you where my motivations lie. I submit this testimony today for the safety of my children, the children in our communities, for the elderly, and those compromised in their health, I am here for the air that gives us life, and for this planet that sustains us. I have no motivation beyond truth. I ask you though, to question the motivations of those that come before you today arguing for these machines and ask you to weigh these motivations by importance. For there is no greater need that to sustain life, without life all things fall away, become useless. No one man should be allowed monetary relief while one man is robbed of his breath, his health, his ability to be safe in the air he breaths, and to provide that protection for his family. That is a freedom above all other freedoms.

I ask you to remember the victims who have spent tens of thousands of dollars for their families to have the most basic right, the ability to breathe clean air, those whom have offered to buy their neighbors out, at cost of thousands of dollars to themselves, only to be refused. Those who have begged for simple acts of raising flues, not burning painted and treated wood, only to be denied. Neighborhoods that have agreed to pay partial heating costs in order to get these machines shut down. This is not justice, this is criminal. It is criminal for the economic advantage of a few that many will suffer irreversible damages and many will suffer unknowing, because they are not educated on the symptoms or the dangers.

Outdoor Wood Furnaces are dangerous pollutants, and because of their poor technology and the ability to burn large unmonitored material, will never be safe. And with this bill, in the state of Connecticut, the most basic right, the right to life, the right to breathe clean air, will begin to be upheld.

There must be a great abyss created, that divides the words "renewable resources" from being connected to machines that are gluttonous pollutants; a great embankment of protection and safeguard built against these kinds of threats on our environment and on our communities. In the words of Franklin D Roosevelt, "The only sure bulwark of continuing liberty is a government strong enough to protect the interests of the people", I do believe that "the care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only object of good government." You are that government and you have the power to protect the people.

As former Senator (Mary Ann) Handley was quoted, "We live in a small state, and we have to look out for ourselves and do what we can to keep our environment clean and ourselves healthy."

I ask that each of you be aligned with your highest moral guidance and that you are able to receive this truth and act upon it.

**It is my belief that all Outdoor Wood Furnaces should be banned and that a state wide emissions standard of 4.0 be put in place, similar to that of Washington State, so that no future manufacturers are allowed to sell or use any product that does not pass independent testing for emissions. This, I believe would safe guard against future assaults to human health and protect the quality of the air our citizens are breathing. If Outdoor Wood Furnaces installed before 2005 are exempt from banning, I see no way to protect those that are already suffering, at minimum they should be forced to move them the 200', raise their flues and if they sell their property, the machines are uninstalled. Stricter registration guidelines need to be put in place for current owners and a public list be made available so potential home owners can research Outdoor Wood Furnace locations in their areas and to safe guard against false instillation dates.**

Thank you for your time and your service to our communities.

Sincerely,



Kathryn Noyes-LeBlanc