

Testimony of Ross L. Malahiazar
Before the Commerce Committee
Regarding
**HOUSE BILL 5465, AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE'S
REGULATORY AND PERMITTING PROCESS**

Submitted by
Ross L. Malahiazar
March 15, 2012

Senator LeBeau, Representative Berger, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill 5465, AAC the State's Regulatory and Permitting Process. I respectfully oppose this bill, which threatens to undo important environmental protections that defend us from perpetuating environmental, health and safety threats that transpire through negligence and irresponsible policies practiced by a select few.

Limiting the potential impact of important organizations like DEEP and CFE is a transgression from policies implemented thus far and the progress we've built over the years. This ruling would "open the floodgates", no pun intended, for an influx of bills that would seek to alleviate the irresponsible, irreversible, malignant behavior of organizations and individuals who dubiously run their operations in a manner that gives individual profit precedence over the majority's health and well-being.

HB 5465 contains a multitude of measures that would eliminate important environmental protections:

First of all, the bill supports a **90-day time limit** for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to review permit applications. This time frame makes it virtually impossible for DEEP to fulfill complete and accurate research studies that could mitigate the infliction of potentially harmful projects. With most labor-intensive Permit application studies requiring well over 90 days to conduct and an increase in chronic understaffing, this bill virtually guarantees that damaging projects will be approved and implemented.

Additionally, the bill requires the Commissioner of Economic and Cultural Development to **conduct a cost-benefit analysis** of all existing state agency regulations. Therefore, any regulation that does not pass this overly stringent parameter would be sent to the Regulations Review Committee for revision, running the risk that it could be repealed entirely. While the hope is that no agency regulation will be an economic burden, we cannot completely ignore our moral, environmental, and social responsibilities as a result. This provision could result in significant rollbacks to important regulations that protect our lands, water, communities, and sustainability and would place a large burden on DECD and Regulations Review.

Moreover, the bill seeks to **repeal the stream channel encroachment law**, a basic protection that allows DEEP to identify stream channels and to consider the impacts of development in those areas upon stream flows, groundwater, wildlife, flooding hazards and other factors critical to the protection of public health, property and the environment. Given the strong storms and flooding we have seen in recent years, this is the worst time to repeal flood control measures.

For these reasons, I ask you to please reject HB 5465. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Ross L. Malahiazar
172 Seymour Rd. Woodbridge, CT 06525
rossmalahiazar@gmail.com, 203-393-2554