

Testimony before the Environment Committee Public Hearing Dated 03/02/2012

On Raised Bill 5118 – An Act Concerning the Reclassification of Trash-to-Energy Facilities as
Class I Renewable Energy Sources

Co-chairs Senator Meyer and Representative Roy:

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. I am a resident of Hartford and a member of the Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice. I oppose Raised Bill 5118.

To classify the electricity created at a Trash-to-Energy plant as “Class I Renewable” implies more than just that the fuel stock is readily available; it also implies that the energy source is safe for the environment and human neighbors. But burning trash releases toxins like mercury and smog into our air. It is also a major source of greenhouse gases and so contributes to climate change.

I recommend a review of the documents entitled “**Stop Trashing the Climate**” at <http://www.stoptrashingthecimate.org/> I offer a quote from the Executive Summary:

“Incinerators emit more CO₂ per mega-watt hour than coal-fired, natural gas-fired, or oil-fired power plants. Incinerating materials such as wood, paper, yard debris, and food discards is far from “climate neutral”; rather, incinerating these & other materials is detrimental to the climate.”

Hartford is host to the Mid-Connecticut Project, the nation’s 5th largest trash-to-energy plant. This plant burns approximately 4,000,000 lbs of trash day in and day out, 365 days a year. I do not consider this plant to be a good neighbor, or benign toward the environment.

As a state, we need to move away from this approach to waste management and to embrace other strategies for our energy needs.

Please retain the existing classification of electric power from trash-to-energy plants by rejecting the proposed reclassification.

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