

**TESTIMONY ON SB 375,  
AN ACT CONCERNING REIMBURSEMENT UNDER THE UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK  
PETROLEUM CLEAN-UP PROGRAM**

Dear Senator Meyer, Representative Widlitz, and other legislators:

My name is Jeffrey Brown. I am a Licensed Environmental Professional in the State of Connecticut – and the manager of the Connecticut office of Environmental Compliance Services in Branford. I am also a resident of Branford, Connecticut and have been a resident of our State for most of my life.

Our company employs approximately 190 environmental professionals including hydrogeologists, environmental scientists, engineers, biologists, technicians and facility compliance experts. Our clients are many of the retail petroleum companies in this room. Our services to them range from underground storage tank and facility compliance services, tank inspections, soil and groundwater evaluations related to petroleum releases, remediation of petroleum release impacts, treatment of impacted groundwater, and assessment of impacts to natural resources. I am before you today to state my opposition to Raised Bill No. 375, An Act Concerning Reimbursement Under the Underground Storage Tanks Petroleum Cleanup Program.

As a Licensed Environmental Professional, my fundamental charge is the protection of human health and the environment. In fulfilling this charge, I and our team assist our clients by evaluating and mitigating the environmental and human health impacts associated with the accidental release of petroleum fuels to the environment. In completing this work, we utilize a host of specialized skills, training, and experience to safeguard the environment - as well as the health, safety and property of the public.

Over my 25 years of experience, 22 of those working strictly in the State of Connecticut, I have managed many 100s of projects involving the assessment and remediation of petroleum releases from underground storage tank systems. I have recommended and directed the installation of treatment systems on private water supply systems to provide clean, potable drinking water to homeowners and businesses. I have assisted in the design and installation of groundwater remediation systems to remove contaminants from and safeguard drinking water supplies. Our work in this realm directly results in a clear understanding of the nature and extent of impacts to the environment, the remediation of those impacts, the improvement of groundwater quality, and the mitigation of risk to the public .

As most of you know, the Program allows our State to meet Federal obligations and our gasoline station owners and operators to comply with mandated federal and state

environmental cleanup requirements in the event of a release from their underground petroleum storage systems. Over the past 25 years, the existence of the Underground Storage Tank Petroleum Cleanup Program has assisted our clients in completing the often costly investigations and remediation associated with accidental releases of petroleum to soils and groundwater. I believe the existence of the Program has resulted in the investigation and remediation of approximately 1,400 retail petroleum sites.

While the Cleanup Program allows our State to meet Federal obligations, its most important benefit is that it safeguards human health and the environment by assisting petroleum fuel retailers in meeting their obligations to investigate and remediate releases to the environment. And in complying with those obligations, they turn to firms like ours, and at least 60-80 other firms in the State of Connecticut and employ staffs of experienced scientists, engineers and highly skilled technicians.

In addition to work completed by companies like ours, activities mandated under petroleum cleanup regulations also provides for a host of other closely-related services including tank contractors, environmental laboratories, tank testing contractors, and remediation contractors.

Our company and those like us and these closely related labs and contractors pay into the State revenue stream in the form of permit fees, business and professional licensing fees, sales taxes, income taxes, and unemployment taxes to local municipalities and the State of Connecticut.

In these challenging economic times, where so much emphasis has been placed on economic stimulus and job creation, we need make environmentally and financially prudent choices, including maintaining a Cleanup Program that has directly resulted in improving the quality of groundwater across our State, mitigating impacts to property, and decreasing risk to the health of our State residents.

In the absence of a Cleanup Program, serious adverse impacts may occur such as delays in environmental investigations and cleanups because UST owners do not have the revolving revenue the cleanup fund offers in meeting cleanup obligations. Subsequently, even greater harm to the environment may result as contaminants associated with motor fuel releases travel uninvestigated or unmitigated in groundwater – resulting in impacts to drinking water supplies, including wells and surface water supplies.

Further, eliminating the Cleanup Program and not effectively funding for the Program (as has been the case for the last few years) jeopardizes not only the environment but literally 100s of Connecticut businesses, the jobs that they provide and the those businesses and their employees we pay into the State.

As the manager of an environmental consulting firm who works for a number of retail petroleum operators in the State, I can attest to the fact that approximately 40-50% of our revenues are associated with work we complete for retail motor fuels operators who seek cost recovery under the UST Cleanup Fund. If this Fund is not viable and those operators do less or close stations, we may have to downsize our operation in the form of layoffs. Further, related companies – including labs, drillers, and cleanup contractors - will also downsize, further blackening what has been an anemic economic recovery in our State. Finally, I suspect that retail motor fuels operators may slow or under- performing retail operations, furthering layoffs and revenues to the State.

As I close, I ask you and our other elected officials not only maintain the Underground Storage Tanks Petroleum Cleanup Program but to fund it such that it can be effective in its objectives...which are to provide some financial assurance that accidental release of petroleum from tank systems are investigated and remediated in a timely manner – and that the environmental and human health and property are safeguarded in our State.

Thank you.