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TESTIMONY ON H.B. 5125 (RAISED) AN ACT INCREASING THE MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATION ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE CONNECTICUT RESOURCES RECOVERY AUTHORITY

Environment Committee Public Hearing February 22, 2012
Submitted by Richard J. Barlow, First Selectman, Town of Canton

As First Selectman of the Town of Canton, a member of the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority Mid Connecticut Project I support the intent of Raised Bill No. H.B. 5125.

I would however request that substitute language be considered to reflect the Board composition as supported by the CRRA Board of Directors, the Municipal Advisory Committee for the Mid Connecticut Project composed of elected officials of the Mid Connecticut Project and the Capitol Region Council of Governments.

The substitute language should include a maximum Board of eleven to thirteen members, elimination of the present Ad Hoc members and a change in the requirement for members from municipalities above/below 50,000 population to 30,000.

It is the consensus that a Board of fifteen members would be too large effectively administer efficiently. Membership between eleven to thirteen was recommended.

There are presently two Ad Hoc members from each of the CRRA projects. When first enacted there were four projects – the Mid Connecticut Project, the Southeast Project, the Bridgeport Project and the Wallingford Project. Ad Hoc members are by Statute only allowed to vote on actions affecting their specific project. They are prohibited from voting on the overall CRRA operating policies and budgets. The Wallingford Project has been transferred to private ownership as has the resource recovery facility for the Bridgeport Project. I understand that the ownership of the Southeast Project will transfer from the CRRA in the next several years. Therefore, the need for Ad Hoc members whom can only vote on matters affecting their project will not be necessary. In addition, the concept that the Ad Hocs could not vote on the general CRRA budget was ridiculous as their tip fees support the general administration of the CRRA.

The need to change the population for municipal members from 50,000 to 30,000 is driven by the simple fact that the number of municipal CRRA users above 50,000 has reduced to the level that there is no longer a sufficient pool of municipalities of that size to be represented on the Board.

One additional change which I would recommend is the requirement that all Board members be from municipalities which are current members of the Authority. Simply put, members should represent municipal customers that have a fiscal interest in the operations of the Authority.