

**Written Testimony of Scott Soucey, Owner of
Scott's Townline Mobil (Farmington, CT)
Environmental Committee Public Hearing
March 16, 2012**

**Raised Bill No. 375, AN ACT CONCERNING REIMBUSEMNETS UNDER THE
UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK PETROLEUM CLEAN-UP ROGRAM.**

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy and Honorable Members of the Environmental Committee. My name is Scott Soucey, Owner of Scott's Townline Mobil located in Farmington, CT. I am strongly urging your reconsideration regarding the closure of the Underground Storage Tank Fund. Based in the legislation outlined in the above referenced Raised Bill No. 375, this fund is currently at risk.

As you know, the Underground Storage Tank Fund was developed as a means of financial support to clean up spills from leaks of underground storage tanks thus keeping the land and its neighboring land environmentally safe and water supply protected. This fund has been receiving monies from the gross receipts tax as consumers purchase gasoline for their vehicles. At one time, this fund had a surplus, but over the years, the government has been earmarking the funds as a means of supporting other line items in the state's budget. The initial intent of the fund has been altered, as well as the surplus the fund once maintained. Now, many small business owners who believed this fund would be available to them in a time of need are in jeopardy.

As you may or may not be aware, the gasoline industry has dramatically changed over the course of recent years in that most real estate that the gasoline stations occupy are no longer owned by "Big Oil" companies. Most major oil companies, such as ExxonMobil, Shell, etc. have sold the real estate directly to the independent franchise dealers.

My fear, as a small business owner for over 17 years and now land owner of my gasoline station, is that I will be forced to close my business if I were to encounter a leak from any of my underground storage tanks without the Underground Storage Tank Fund.

Additionally, if this legislation were to pass, many station owners would be unable to obtain insurance for the tanks, yet alone afford such a costly insurance policy. Currently, many independent gasoline station owners, like me, are already struggling to survive in this competitive market with gas prices soaring.

If the fund is not kept in place and I encounter a problem with my underground storage tanks, my business and livelihood will be in serious jeopardy and this would result in the closure of my business.

I feel strongly that this fund should remain in place and be properly funded with the gross receipts tax to protect our environment and many Connecticut small business owners.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Scott Soucey
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