

Written Testimony of Martha Kelly
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Energy and Technology Committee
March 7, 2013

Written Testimony Concerning Governor's Bill 6360 An Act Concerning Implementation of Connecticut's
Comprehensive Energy Strategy

I thank you for this opportunity to address the Energy and Technology Committee on this important matter.

I am a resident of Hartford, Connecticut's capitol city. I work for the Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice. I am a low income person who lives in a rented apartment. My apartment is heated with gas which I pay for, often with assistance from Energy Assistance programs.

My community suffers a high rate of asthma. I urge the state to move away from trash incineration and to adopt policies that move us toward Zero Waste. **I strongly oppose any measure that subsidizes or incentivizes the polluting trash incinerators in our state or the construction of any new facilities.**

Hartford is the location for the 5th largest trash incinerator in the nation. At this time the waste of 50 Connecticut towns is incinerated in Hartford at the Mid-Connecticut Project of CRRA, recently renamed the Connecticut Waste System. **In the year ending June, 2012, that plant processed on average 4,512,169 lbs. of MSW each day. It operates 365 days a year. (see report by CRRA to CT CGA)**

Municipal Solid Waste is a dirty fuel, more polluting even than coal. I urge you to review the references I have provided links to, especially **Burning Public Money on Dirty Energy; Misdirected Subsidies for Waste-to Energy" Incinerators**, a November 2011 report by the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives.

I am concerned that the Governor's proposal puts too great an emphasis on Natural Gas conversions over alternate approaches like **Energy Efficiency** which need more resources devoted to them. Natural Gas is a finite fossil fuel. Its extraction and distribution carries many hidden costs. New methods of extraction have caused contamination of drinking water supplies and farming operations. Natural Gas pipelines are sources of many leaks and there have been a number of devastating explosions: in February one in Kansas City, in November, 2012, there was the one in Springfield, MA.

Gas prices may be low now, but are not guaranteed and consumers are not able to switch between fuels at will as they may make choices in the purchase of other kinds of goods. Also, renters typically have no say in the kind of fuel they use, except by moving to another apartment.

I urge the legislature to **prioritize the funding of Energy Efficiency Programs so that they are available to all and fully used.** Please make sure that these are designed to give incentives to landlords to participate even where they do not pay for the utility used. These also need to be designed to reach renters who are not the owners of the home, furnace, or other facilities.

Many homes here in the city are heated by oil. It is important to continue to **make energy efficiency program available to users of any fuel.**

Please direct DEEP and PURA to provide incentives and financing to all solutions to our dependence on fossil fuel use.

Please protect the integrity of the Renewable Portfolio Standard. We should limit Connecticut's Class I RPS to sources of clean power build in Connecticut. I oppose inclusion of Canadian hydropower or any form of incineration or biomass.

Please fix Virtual Net Metering so that it can properly support use of Connecticut's parking lots, brownfields and other large spaces as solar collectors. Roger Smith of Clean Water action will have more detail on this great idea.

Please improve the plan with attention to resiliency. Years ago having a gas furnace ensured heat during power outages. This is not so today. In October, 2011, CT experienced an unusual early snow storm with long term power outages. There was great disruption as gas stations that had power were deluged by customers seeking gas for cars and generators.

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References:

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