

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to urge you to reconsider the DEEP's current Comprehensive Energy Strategy. The emphasis on natural gas in the plan is dangerous and misguided. The document states "DEEP acknowledges that there are significant environmental and public health issues associated with the drilling and transport of natural gas, which the state will actively address wherever possible," but this concern is apparently trumped by the availability of cheap, abundant natural gas. The document claims that natural gas produces lower emissions than oil or coal, but as Kate Sheppard put it in Mother Jones (<http://www.motherjones.com/blue-marble/2011/04/natural-gas-worse-coal>), "While burning natural gas may emit less carbon dioxide, its extraction releases quite a bit of methane, a more potent greenhouse gas. Gas from shale—a fine-grained layer of rock below the earth's surface—is also responsible for 30 percent more greenhouse gas emissions than conventional natural gas. The study found that up to 7.9 percent of the methane escapes directly from the wells, leaks from pipelines, or is released in venting and flaring." The current mania for cheap natural gas, held up as a "clean" alternative to coal and oil, is contributing to a significant boom in greenhouse gases. The DEEP's plan to increase the amount of natural gas usage in CT only adds to this problem, and does so under the misleading pretense that such a switch is a step in the right direction. What's more, natural gas is yet another finite, unsustainable resource which is simply buying us some time before we have to come to terms with creating sustainable, renewable energy sources. Kicking the can of responsibility down the road to future generations, while saddling them with devastating climate change through the greenhouse emissions related to natural gas extraction, is irresponsible. We need to look to real solutions to our climate and energy crises, and deny the false solution of natural gas.

Sincerely,
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