

Written Testimony of Judith Allen
Before the Connecticut 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 am a resident of West Hartford. I work with the Inter-Religious Eco-Justice Network (IREJN). I am also involved in the National Climate Ethics Campaign. I am an aunt, a neighbor, a citizen, a caregiver, a person of faith, and now dedicated advocate for Earth and Climate Justice.

I first became alarmed about the state of our dependence on fossil fuels through my spiritual beliefs and practices. As my understanding of how interconnected and interdependent all life is on Earth, I could not help but look at my part in that. I learned a lot about fossil fuels, the mining, burning, transporting, and profits rapidly bringing changes in our climate, a crisis of a magnitude never before faced by our world. I have also become more informed about how our slowness to confront the sources of climate change is a moral and ethical problem fueled by our own greed and profits.

Eco-Justice is Human Justice. The most vulnerable, least empowered, poor, and displaced among us, suffer the most as a result of our poor energy and environmental standards. Diluting Class I Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS), slows our progress toward a just solution to Climate Change. CT is not an island. The policies we adopt here have implications for a larger community.

I am against changes in Class I Renewable Portfolio Standards that would include Canadian hydroelectric power and any power created through a trash to incinerator program.

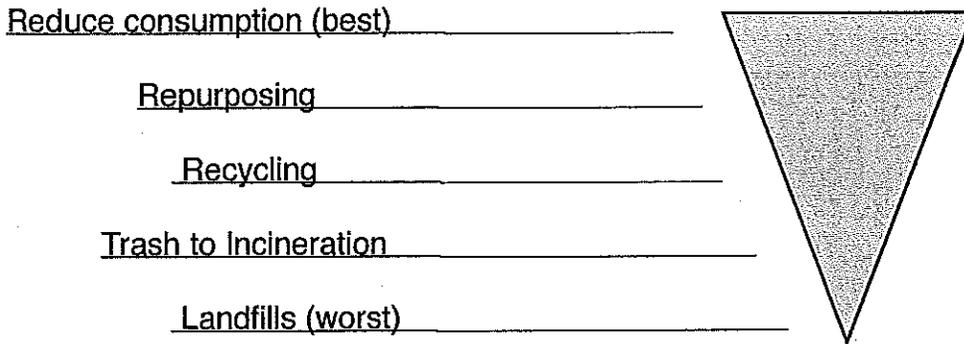
Class I renewables are meant to be the best renewable energy sources to be promoted as solutions to our green house gas emissions. CT sets goals for itself to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce energy consumption, and reduce our ongoing contribution to climate change. Diluting Class I energy sources moves CT in the opposite direction.

The power from Canadian Hydroelectric Plants is a poor choice for several reasons. It is a huge damn. Through its construction sacred lands of Canadian First Nation Peoples were flooded. This damn disrupts the natural flow of the river endangering fish and other aquatic life who depend on rivers and streams. The process of bring electricity from Canada would require the building of new transmission lines crossing lands through Vermont and New Hampshire, dividing wild habitats as it passes through some of New England's most pristine forests, hills, and mountains. If CT were to include Canadian hydro in the Class I renewable portfolio it would affect our neighbor states, and support the immoral taking of sacred land.

Furthermore, CT needs to be promoting sustainable power within the CT. This Canadian Hydro undercuts that effort. CT has options for hydro electric power and other sustainable energy sources for development within the state. Those options already comply with Class I standards.

Trash to incineration is an energy source that has no place in Class I RPS. The only way this is a renewable energy is if we all continue to produce ever more trash and divert waste from recycling. It is at cross purposes with goals to reduce consumption and increase recycling. Displayed on Coventa's website, a Bristol, CT, trash to incinerator operation, is a graphic showing why trash to incineration should not be a Class I renewable energy source.

At the bottom of the triangle is the most costly, environmentally destructive solution to landfills. The top is the most efficient, environmentally friendly, and lowest cost.



Clearly trash to incinerator, while perhaps an improvement over landfills, is not a Class I renewable energy source. It requires that in order for incinerators to make a profit, we continue our insatiable ability to produce evermore trash, and weaken our efforts to recycle.

In summary; we should not dilute our Class I Renewable Portfolio Standards through inclusion of Canadian Hydro and Trash to Incineration.

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