

**n e c s a**

New England Convenience Store  
A s s o c i a t i o n

**CONNECTICUT  
CHAPTER**

**Testimony Submitted By:  
Cathy Barber, NECSA CT Chapter  
To the General Law Committee  
February 7, 2013**

**RE: HB 5313 & HB5344, Legislation requiring the Installation of Generator at Gas Stations**

Chairman Doyle, Chairman Baram and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to HB 5313 and HB 5344. My name is Cathy Barber of XtraMart/Drake Petroleum. I chair the Connecticut Chapter of the New England Convenience Store Association, representing convenience and gasoline locations throughout Connecticut.

We oppose bills mandating installation of expensive generators at all gasoline stations in the State of Connecticut. **With due respect to proponents of these measures, requiring generators at the point-of-sale to consumers is a drastic over-simplification of the supply system.** The proposed generator "solution" is the equivalent of putting nail polish on your finger nails after breaking your arm while having a massive heart-attack. It's not a workable solution; it won't work.

A gas station with a generator does not guarantee gasoline will be available for sale to anyone. Prior to the retailer, there are many facets of the supply system disrupted in emergencies. For example, during Storm Sandy, supply vessels were prevented from entering the Sound due to floating debris. Some terminals had no power, others had pumps under water or damaged computer systems. Because of downed power lines and trees, some drivers could not report for duty. Streets were impassable for personal & delivery vehicles. Panic buying contributed to local inventory outages at the terminals as well as the retail gas stations. Industry members did an outstanding job getting fuel to operating stations including flying drivers in from the Midwest to relieve others who were near their hours-of-service limits.

**Including the transfer switch and wiring, a standby generator can cost \$60,000 to \$70,000 for a 200KW (650 amps at 208) unit depending on the type of fuel it runs on, diesel, liquid propane or natural gas.** This standby unit will need regular attention to ensure it will be ready if & when the power goes out. Annual maintenance is another related expense. **To many station owners, this cost is staggering and, frankly, some simply cannot afford it and could close.**

In an era when many gas stations are closing down due to low margins, stiff competition from wholesale clubs and dominant grocery/gas operators, as well as other burdensome regulations, we can ill-afford to lose more privately operated stations.

Not only is there is a significant capital investment associated with setting up systems like this but there is also the expense of initial permits & ongoing testing. Most importantly, in many cases it won't accomplish the goal of providing retail gasoline during power failures and emergencies. If power is out for any prolonged period, locations likely won't get fuel deliveries and the tanks will be empty.

**When power is lost, it is not the station's fault; forcing a gas station owner to make costly investments because the public utilities fail to provide power is inappropriate, outrageous, we think.** As private sector businesses, gasoline station owners should be able to decide for themselves if they can afford these costly systems.

NECSA's Connecticut Chapter opposes these bills and asks you to vote against them. Thank you.

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