

FairWindCT, Inc.
P.O. Box 225
Colebrook, CT 06021

**Testimony of FairWindCT, Inc.
Before the Committee on Environment**

In opposition to SB 1019, AN ACT CONCERNING ADMINISTRATIVE STREAMLINING
AT THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Submitted by Joyce C. Hemingson, Ph.D.
President, FairWindCT, Inc.
March 15, 2013

FairWindCT is a non-profit volunteer group formed by Connecticut residents in 2010. We joined then Attorney General Richard Blumenthal at his January 2011 press conference, calling for regulations to protect citizens from the siting of 40-story industrial wind turbines in residential neighborhoods. We went on to testify at the Energy and Technology Committee's public hearing in March 2011, and supported the passage of PA 11-245 to develop regulations for industrial wind turbines.

Dear Senator Meyer, Representative Gentile, and members of the Committee on Environment,

SB 1019: FairWindCT submits this testimony against HB 1019, An Act Concerning Administrative Streamlining at the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. If passed, it would repeal the existing Control of Noise regulations (which, although they date to 1978 and need updating, are detailed) and leave nothing specific in its place. The proposed language of Sec. 8 deletes a "comprehensive, state-wide program of noise regulation" and seems instead to shift responsibility for noise standards and the costs of monitoring and enforcement to each of Connecticut's 169 towns.

The language that would be deleted from Sec. 22a-69 1a and 1b regulates stationary noise sources in order "to protect the public health, safety and welfare." Large industrial wind turbines that can stand 492 feet tall to the tip of the blades and sweep an area close to 2 acres with each rotation, are stationary noise sources. The blades generate audible and inaudible frequencies, with the tips moving at speeds up to 180 mph. Sound is generated by equipment within the nacelle as well.

During public hearings before the Energy and Technology Committee and Connecticut Siting Council, FairWindCT submitted testimony about noise regulations and setbacks from homes for industrial wind turbines in other states. Last year Maine lowered the allowable nighttime noise from industrial turbines down to 42 dBA from 45 dBA. Maine has the most installed industrial wind turbines of any state in New England.

Massachusetts' law allows 10 dBA above ambient noise levels, but its towns can pass more restrictive bylaws. Just this month, the Town of Falmouth lowered its threshold for the sound setback for turbines from 8 decibels to 6. This is the same town whose selectmen voted to remove two town-owned industrial wind turbines because of noise and health complaints, most from people living within a radius of 0.75 miles from the turbines.

In other countries and states where industrial wind turbines have been placed too close to homes, people have abandoned their property as a last resort to restore their health. Connecticut needs noise standards that protect our citizens and their property. If the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection does not take the lead on this, then it will fall to local government.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony.

Sincerely,

Joyce C. Hemingson, Ph.D.
President, FairWindCT
P.O. Box 225
Colebrook, CT 06021
jchemingson@aol.com
860-379-6425