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TESTIMONY

DATE: March 22., 2013

PRESENTED TO: Environment Committee
Connecticut General Assembly

PRESENTED BY: Karl J. Wagener
Executive Director

SUBJECT: Raised Bill 1134, AAC Outdoor Wood-Burning Furnaces

The Council wishes to express its support for Bill 1134. It is a reasonable compromise that allows people to burn wood but, we hope, not afflict their neighbors with harmful smoke.

The Council strongly recommends amending one portion of the bill. It is very important that only clean wood be burned in these units. As we read the current draft of the bill, however, anyone who owns an OWF installed prior to July 8, 2005 would not be subject to the requirement to burn clean wood, nor to the requirement to operate the furnace in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Presumably, someone with an older furnace could burn anything in any manner. We recommend that the following paragraphs be removed from subdivision (b)(1) and given their own subdivision so that they **apply to all OWFs**:

(C) No other materials are burned in the outdoor wood-burning furnace other than **[wood that has not been chemically treated]** clean wood; and

(D) Installation and operation of the outdoor wood-burning furnace is in accordance with the manufacturer's written instructions, provided such instructions do not conflict with the provisions of this section.

The reference to installation in (D), above, might have to stay where it is in the bill, in which case a new subdivision should be added that says "operation of the outdoor wood-burning furnace is in accordance with the manufacturer's written instructions, provided such instructions do not conflict with the provisions of this section," to apply to all OWFs.

We respectfully remind the Committee that if this bill is not enacted this year and if the federal EPA, as expected, adopts emission regulations for OWFs, then all of the requirements in the existing statute regarding distances to neighbors, stack height and clean fuel will expire. This bill is essential to maintaining some reasonable rules for siting and operating OWFs.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill and this testimony. The Council was made aware of the serious problems of smoke from Outdoor Wood-Burning Furnaces (OWFs) from numerous complaints. We have gathered more information on OWFs, but it would appear that Committee members already are aware of the problems and solutions.