

March 22, 2013

Environment Committee  
Room 3200, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106

**Testimony of the American Lung Association in Connecticut in Support of  
Raised Senate Bill 1134 An Act Concerning Outdoor Wood Furnaces**

Senator Meyer, Representative Gentile and Members of the Environment  
Committee:

My name is Michelle Marichal and I serve as the Acting Director of Health Education and Public Policy at the American Lung Association (ALA) in Connecticut. The American Lung Association is a not-for-profit public health organization dedicated to fighting lung disease through research, education and public policy.

The American Lung Association supports Senate Bill 1134, An Act Concerning Outdoor Wood Furnaces (OWF) which seeks to require OWF usage to meet certain criteria.

Please do not mistake our support of this measure as a statement that we are satisfied with the bill as it is written. To require OWF meet certain criteria is a step in the right forward but it is not a resolution to the problems caused by these units. The bill states that any OWF bought in Connecticut after October 2013 must be a Phase II unit. These Phase II units are also polluting and requiring them will not protect public health. Our nationwide policy on these devices could not be clearer. "The American Lung Association strongly opposes the use of outdoor wood fired boilers for heating and other purposes and supports measures to greatly reduce emissions from or eliminate outdoor wood fired boilers."

According to scientific evidence brought forth by the Environmental Protection Agency particle exposure from wood smoke can lead to both long- and short-term health problems. Potential health problems include: an increase in respiratory symptoms, a decrease in lung function, aggravated asthma, development of chronic bronchitis among many others<sup>1</sup>.

We urge you to take this step to provide some regulations but also to commit to taking stronger actions that will protect the residents of Connecticut from the toxic pollution from OWFs.

Furthermore, the American Lung Association in Connecticut recognizes that minimum setbacks or stack height requirements do not provide assurance that the emissions from these units will not pose a threat to human health. Other New England states have recognized this fact and their law contains a provision that defines an air quality violation as smoke crossing a neighbor's property line for more than 12 minutes in any hour. While this may not be a perfect solution, it does point out the need for a clear and enforceable definition of a violation against a neighbor's private property. Although several Connecticut towns passed ordinances to ban outdoor wood furnaces, this is not an issue that should be done town by

town. Wood smoke infiltration from a neighbors OWF is as dangerous in one community as it is in another.

We appreciate your on-going efforts to address outdoor wood furnaces as well as wood smoke pollution in general and urge you to pass this measure and follow up with additional public health protections. The American Lung Association in Connecticut is committed to finding solutions to these environmental problems.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Marichal". The signature is written in black ink on a light pink rectangular background.

Michelle Marichal  
Acting Director, Health Education and Public Policy  
American Lung Association in Connecticut