



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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Dear Senator Meyer, Representative Gentile, Honorable Ranking Members and Vice Chairs and Members of the Environment Committee:

I wish to testify today on the following bills:

HB 5308, An Act Concerning the Regulation of Fracking Waste

SB 237, An Act Prohibiting the Storage or Disposal of Fracking Waste in Connecticut

I applaud the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection for proposed HB 5308, attempting to extend Connecticut hazardous waste regulations to wastes exempted by the so-called Bentsen Amendment to the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

It is outrageous that Congress has exempted a vast category of toxic chemicals from meaningful regulation and it is critical that Connecticut act quickly and decisively to protect Long Island Sound, streams and rivers, the public water supply from unregulated fracking waste before it arrives from states in the region. We need to act this session to ensure that fracking wastes do not wind up in storm drains, municipal wastewater treatment facilities, or spread on our roads as a deicer.

This proposal indicates that DEEP takes the potential problems of fracking waste seriously and is intent on ensuring that the same basic safeguards that apply to other toxic wastes applies to fracking wastes.

However, I am concerned that HB 5308 may not go far enough to ensure public health. It is no secret that DEEP's resources are constrained, and there is little to suggest that any Connecticut hazardous waste processing facility has the expertise or the resources to fully handle produced water and other wastes containing a wide spectrum of toxic chemicals, heavy metals, saline products, and, in some cases, radioactive materials.

If other states choose to engage in hydraulic fracturing, they are welcome to do so. However the Environment Committee has the opportunity and the responsibility to send them the message that they cannot export the social and environmental consequences of that decision to their neighbors; instead they should act as true environmental stewards and take responsibility for the entire lifecycle of environmental impact.

The easiest and cleanest solution to this looming and critical public health issue is a simple ban on the storage and disposal of fracking waste. While I will not oppose any efforts to improve the status quo, I would urge the Committee and my colleagues to give strong consideration in particular to SB 237 as the best method of dealing with a growing problem.

In Sec. 22a-148 CGS, et seq. the Connecticut General Assembly has banned possession of sources of ionizing radiation and radioactive materials except in cases specifically authorized by the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission or by DEEP regulations for specific public purposes. Given that fracking waste serves no public purpose, it should, out of an abundance of caution, be banned from our state.

Sincerely,

Matthew Lesser