

Written Testimony of Pamela Arifian, Connecticut Conference
of United Church of Christ, and Housatonic Valley 350.org

Before the Connecticut General Assembly Environment
Committee

March 4, 2014

Written Testimony Concerning House Bill 5409 **AN
ACT CONCERNING HYDRAULIC FRACTURING
WASTE.**

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my support of House Bill 5409 concerning hydraulic fracturing waste in Connecticut.

I support the classification of hydraulic fracturing waste as hazardous in HB 5409. This bill is a step in the right direction, however it requires more comprehensive and inclusive language in order to protect the health and safety of Connecticut's residents. Solely classifying fracking waste as hazardous is insufficient. I urge you to support a statewide ban on all fracking waste.

HB 5409 should also include language that prohibits the procurement, acquisition, possession, storage, handling, treatment, processing, application or disposal of all treated or untreated oil and gas drilling waste byproducts and their constituents for any purpose in the State of Connecticut. As is, the bill is not enough to guarantee a viable future for our state.

If HB 5409 and SB 237 (an Act Prohibiting Fracking Waste in CT) were enacted together, they would provide the protection we need in CT against the dangers of fracking waste.

I support these bills together as a resident of Connecticut, specifically from the western half of the State where the toxic wastewater would potentially be stored. Regardless of how well-regulated a hazardous

waste is, accidents happen. Containers leak. Major emergency weather events such as Sandy or Irene come through and wreak havoc on the best-laid plans to keep neighbors safe from leaks or spills. Trucks get in accidents, rollover, and spill their contents into rivers, lakes, ponds, wetlands, farmlands, and in neighborhoods. This potentially radioactive toxic waste is impossible to remediate if it is released into the environment, and it's just not worth the risk, period.

I support these bills together as a mother concerned for the future that my child will grow up in. I do not want her choking on the diesel fumes of the thousands upon thousands of trucks that will be driving toxic wastewater through our region. I want her to be able to confidently play in our waterways and woods without worry of exposure to toxic chemicals or radiation.

I support these bills together as an advocate for environmental justice. I do not want this public health threat in my backyard, just like the Exxon CEO does not want fracking wells in his backyard. I am fairly certain that nobody will want this in their backyard, and if history repeats itself over and over again, this waste will end up in or near the neighborhoods where historically marginalized communities live, and that is not right.

I support these bills together as an educator of and witness to climate change. I do not support the practice of fracking, and believe it should be scrapped or overhauled entirely to ensure the safety of neighbors, land, air and water. The leaking methane (a potent greenhouse gas contributing to climate change), the flammable water, the poisoned waterways and earthquakes in places that don't normally experience them (e.g, Youngstown OH) are all unacceptable. Natural gas may be a cleaner burning fuel than oil or coal, but it's life cycle is as dirty as dirty coal, when the aforementioned results are taken into account. We need to move beyond fossil fuels, now.

I support these bills together as a citizen concerned about clean water resources. Against the backdrop of California's severe drought (and throughout the Southwest US), more intense and powerful wildfires, chemical spills into water sources (West Virginia, North Carolina, etc.),

and corporate water-grabbing, the practice of using 2-4 million gallons of fresh water per fracking site is simply irresponsible and an abomination.

I support these bills together as a Connecticut taxpayer, who does not want to pay for the increased road repairs that can be expected as the roads experience rapid deterioration from the myriad heavy truck trips.

I support these bills together as a human being wanting to support others who are suffering the consequences of living on shale rock and in a climate of lax regulation and corporate bullying. If we do not allow their waste to be dumped here, perhaps other states will follow suit, and perhaps that might pressure the industry to come up with more efficient and less wasteful ways to do their business.

Thank you again for the opportunity to bear witness and to provide testimony in support of HB 5509 and SB 237, to prohibit storage and disposal of fracking waste in Connecticut.

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