

Testimony of Barbara McCarthy
Before the Energy and Technology Committee

In Support of
H.B. 5410 AAC GAS COMPANIES' COST RECOVERY OF LOST AND
UNACCOUNTED FOR GAS
H.B. 5409 AAC HYDRAULIC FRACTURING WASTE

Submitted by
Barbara McCarthy
March 4, 2013

Senator Duff, Representative Reed, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of HB 5410, An Act Concerning Gas Companies' Cost Recovery of Lost and Unaccounted for Gas, and HB 5409, An Act Concerning Hydraulic Fracturing Waste. Both bills address problems in the natural gas industry that damage our environment.

HB 5410 seeks to incentive gas companies to repair pipeline leaks that are allowing methane to escape into our atmosphere. I don't think it's fair that gas companies can charge me for gas I'm not even using. The greenhouse gas potential of methane alarms me and I think Connecticut needs to do more to combat it.

Currently, natural gas distribution companies are allowed to charge customers for the cost of unlimited "lost and unaccounted for gas," much of which is gas that escapes through small leaks throughout the distribution system.

Companies are only required to fix leaks that threaten public safety, and since they can recover the cost of

leaked gas, they have no incentive to repair non-hazardous leaks. This is troubling on two fronts:

1. Customers are made to bear the cost of gas they are not using; and
 2. Methane has truly dangerous global warming potential—it is 56 times stronger than carbon dioxide over a 20-year period and 21 times stronger over a 100-year period.
- HB 5410 would address these problems by limiting gas companies' ability to recover the cost of lost gas, which provides an incentive to fix leaks; over time, this will cut greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the cost of gas.

A similar bill has been in effect in New York State since the 1990s; the New York Public service Commission estimates it saves consumers in that state \$48 million a year.

HB 5409 would classify fracking fluid as hazardous waste, closing a loophole in federal law that's allowed it to remain unregulated.: I care about the safety of our wells and aquifers, and don't want toxic fracking waste polluting Connecticut's groundwater. I don't think private gas companies should be able to make Connecticut their dumping ground for toxic waste. The regulatory approach in HB 5409 and similar bill

HB 5308 is a positive step, but not sufficient on its own. It would still allow the fluid to be stored and treated in Connecticut. The complete ban in SB 237, before the Environment Committee, is a more comprehensive solution to protect Connecticut's waters and public health.

Please support both HB 5410 and HB 5409. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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