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February 18, 2014

Senator Meyer, Representative Gentile, Honorable Members of the Environment Committee, it is an honor to present testimony to you.

There are two bills of which I am a co-sponsor and one which I support wholeheartedly. All three affect my constituents so I am looking for your support as well.

Let's begin – out of numerical order with HB 5086 – "An Act Concerning Certain Applications for Reimbursement from the Underground Storage Tank Petroleum Clean-Up Program." This subject matter was heard and passed this Environment Committee last year.

As you may remember, it involves the second generation of a family whose fathers/uncles owned a gas station in Meriden which they leased to a gas company. There was a spill and that leasee cleaned up the spill. Much later to that clean-up a plume was discovered on the property next door. DEEP cleaned up that neighboring property and has been billing the woman who inherited the gas station property. They are from Meriden, Wallingford and North Haven.

Basically, what the proposal would do would allow all there sisters and cousins to make application to the fund. I urge your support

Secondly, I ask your support for HB 5082, "An Act Concerning Wastewater Treatment Plant Design Flow." What happened was the Department of Environmental Protection decided to change the time for inspection of the treatment plant to determine if a plant has reached 90% or more of its design flow from 365 days to 186 days. This is a terrific expense for any community because it could mean on a half year basis you would have to re-tool the plant regardless of the weather or any other condition affecting the plant. To my mind, returning to the yearly inspection brings greater stability and savings for the tax payers. Please support this proposal.

Thirdly – please support HB 5081 "An Act Concerning Phosphorous Reduction Reimbursements to Municipalities." This was a major debate in 2012 because of the towns affected by the EPA standards on Phosphorous. Five of the towns are in the Quinnipiac River Basin.

However, Meriden got a by because they had just finished their water treatment plant. However, Wallingford and Cheshire, my towns, did not. Public Act 13-239 stated that the money to help the towns in phosphorous reduction would only be available to the first three construction projects.

Please be real! You cannot snap your fingers and expect a project of this magnitude be ready to roll. Common sense and good government would make the increase in funds to 50% be available to all towns reducing phosphorous. Please support this legislation. Existing legislation can hurt my towns now, will yours be next?

Thank you,
Mary G. Fritz
State Representative – 90th District
Assistant Deputy Speaker