

**CITIZENS  
CAMPAIGN**  
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT



www.citizenscampaign.org

□ 225A Main Street • Farmingdale, NY 11735

516-390-7150

□ 188 East Post Road, Suite #202 • White Plains, NY 10601

914-358-9840

□ 744 Broadway • Albany, NY 12207

518-772-1862

□ 733 Delaware Road, Box 140 • Buffalo, NY 14223

716-831-3206

□ P.O. Box 661 • Syracuse, NY 13206

315-472-1339

□ 2404 Whitney Avenue, 2nd Floor • Hamden, CT 06518

203-821-7050

**Empowering Communities. Advocating Solutions.**

**Testimony in Support of SB 378**  
**Testimony by Citizens Campaign for the Environment**  
**Louis W. Burch, Program Coordinator**

**March 11, 2014**  
**Hartford, CT**

Senator Doyle, Representative Baram, distinguished members of the General Law Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

My name is Louis Burch, program coordinator for Citizens Campaign for the Environment (CCE). Supported by over 80,000 members in Connecticut and New York State, CCE works to empower communities and advocate solutions that protect public health and the natural environment. CCE would like to offer the following testimony in support of Senate Bill 378:

**SB 378-AAC THE DISPOSAL AND COLLECTION OF UNUSED MEDICATION**

Flushing unwanted or unused medication has been a common disposal practice, despite the fact that sewage treatment plants, septic systems, and drinking water infrastructure are not designed to treat or remove these contaminants. Research points to several potential health concerns, including hormone disruption, antibiotic resistance, as well as potential synergistic effects from interactions with other medications. Studies have revealed impacts to aquatic wildlife including: feminization of male fish when exposed to hormones (birth control) and reduced fertility due to exposure to anti-depressants and beta blockers. A nationwide study done in 1999 and 2000 by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) found low levels of drugs such as antibiotics, hormones, contraceptives, and steroids in 80% of the rivers and streams tested.

Connecticut should promote the safe disposal of unused and expired medication, while preventing adverse impacts of pharmaceuticals in the environment. State-run pharmaceutical collection events have proven to be popular and effective, but are infrequent and may not be widely accessible to all residents of the state. By implementing a comprehensive program to collect and dispose of unused and expired pharmaceuticals across the state, Connecticut residents will have a consistent and secure alternative to flushing unwanted medications- a practice which has become commonplace in the absence of formal drug disposal policies. An educational component at the point of sale would be necessary to help inform the public about the new law, and provide individuals who take prescription medication with the locations of disposal sites in their area.

CCE supports the concept of this bill, which is to set up a framework where pharmacies within the state of Connecticut would be able to collect and remove unused and unwanted pharmaceuticals from the public waste stream. As written, however, the bill may contain onerous stipulations that are not necessary to ensure effective management of this waste stream. In particular, provisions requiring unused medications to be disposed of at a bio-medical waste facility are unnecessary and may, in fact act as a barrier to passage of this legislation. **CCE recommends amending this provision to require disposal at any EPA compliant incineration facility.**

On behalf of our members in Connecticut, we appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony and look forward to working with you on this important issue.