

GOOD AFTERNOON.

MY NAME IS JIM FERGUSON AND I AM THE OPERATOR OF THE FACILITY AT ROCKY NECK STATE PARK, THROUGH BESB.

I'M HERE TO ADDRESS SB 1061, WHICH I OPPOSE.

THE REASON FOR MY OPPOSITION IS THAT IT WOULD DIRECTLY IMPACT MY LIVELIHOOD AND THAT OF THE 21 PEOPLE THAT I EMPLOY.

I HAVE BEEN GIVEN THIS OPPORTUNITY BY BESB AND DEEP, AND I HAVE BEEN VERY GRATEFUL FOR BEING ABLE TO FULFILL MY OBLIGATIONS TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITIES.

AS A BLIND PERSON, MY ABILITY TO HAVE A CAREER OR A JOB IS VERY LIMITED. THROUGH BESB, I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FULFILL MY DREAM OF OWNING AND MANAGING MY OWN BUSINESS. THIS PROGRAM HAS AFFORDED ME THE ABILITY, ALSO, TO BE INDEPENDENT, SELF-SUFFICIENT, AND HELP SUPPORT MY FAMILY.

MY FATHER STARTED IN THE RESTAURANT BUSINESS OVER 50 YEARS AGO AND WAS PROUD OF THE BUSINESS HE OWNED AND MANAGED. I LEARNED EVERYTHING I KNOW ABOUT THE FOOD INDUSTRY FROM MY FATHER; AND, AT TIMES, I WOULD PROUDLY ACCOMPANY TO WORK SINCE I WAS 7. I KNEW FROM THAT VERY YOUNG AGE THAT I WANTED TO HAVE MY OWN BUSINESS TOO. I AM PROUD TO BE ABLE TO CONTINUE IN HIS FOOTSTEPS BY OWNING AND OPERATING THE CONCESSION STAND AT ROCKY NECK STATE PARK.

IF THIS BILL IS PASSED, IT WILL NOT ONLY TAKE AWAY MY JOB AND MY INCOME, BUT IT WILL TAKE AWAY MY ABILITY TO BE INDEPENDENT. IT WILL ALSO TAKE AWAY MY CHANCE AT FULFILLING MY GOAL OF RUNNING MY OWN BUSINESS AND BEING SUCCESSFUL IN MY DREAMS IN LIFE.

JUST IN CLOSING, I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE HOW THIS VENTURE WAS PRESENTED TO ME. ON MY BIRTHDAY LAST YEAR, I RECEIVED A CALL FROM MY CONTACT AT BESB AND WAS TOLD THAT THEY NEEDED AN OPERATOR FOR ROCKY NECK'S CONCESSION STAND. I KNEW IN THAT INSTANT THAT MY FATHER WAS IN HEAVEN WATCHING OVER ME AS HE ALWAYS DID WHEN HE WAS ALIVE.

PLEASE DON'T TAKE AWAY MY ABILITY TO TAKE CARE OF MYSELF AND MY FAMILY ... AND PLEASE DON'T TAKE AWAY MY DREAM.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME TODAY AND ALLOWING ME TO SPEAK ON MY BEHALF AND ON BEHALF OF ALL OPERATORS IN THIS PROGRAM.

JAMES FERGUSON – 860-235-4521

MacFerguson Express Cantina at Rocky Neck State Park, Niantic, CT

