

## TESTIMONY

TO: ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

FROM: PAUL S. TIMPANELLI, PRESIDENT & CEO, BRIDGEPORT REGIONAL BUSINESS COUNCIL

RE: HB 6022, An Act Concerning Thermal Energy Transportation Companies in the City of Bridgeport

Dear Co-Chairpersons Reed, Doyle, and Members of the Energy & Technology Committee:

The Bridgeport Regional Business Council (BRBC) strongly supports HB 6022, An Act Concerning Thermal Energy Transportation Companies in the City of Bridgeport in its original form.

The Bridgeport Regional Business Council represents more than 900 businesses in the region, manages the Bridgeport Economic Development Corporation, and has developed a public / private partnership with the City of Bridgeport in the creation and implementation of B Green 2020, the city's comprehensive sustainable development plan.

Since 2008, we at the BRBC have worked side by side with the City to make Bridgeport one of the greenest cities in America and transforming its image from a declining manufacturing community in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to a smart, sustainable community in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. And we have made significant progress.

We are home to the second largest fuel cell in the world, powering more than 15,000 homes with clean, renewable energy; we are about to begin construction on a 22 acre solar and fuel cell park at our closed municipal landfill; we have attracted more than a dozen new green businesses to Bridgeport, employing hundreds of people and creating millions of dollars in new tax revenues for the City; and we have or are

in the processes of permitting several new green technologies to dispose of our hospital waste, sludge, yellow & brown and other waste products in a more environmentally sensitive manner.

Much of this effort is occurring in the Bridgeport Eco-Technology Park, a vision the Mayor and BRBC have promoted at the state and national levels as a model for industrial symbiosis . . . where one company's waste product becomes feedstock for a new and productive use. In this Eco-Park, in our community and dare I say in our state and nation one of the waste products that is totally underutilized is the waste heat coming from power plants, incinerators and other combustion processes. It merely dissipates into the atmosphere when it has great potential for re-use . . . creating economic opportunity while improving environmental quality, a win-win proposition for all.

In Europe, waste heat is reused in many ways. One of those proven ways is in a hot water pipeline, to heat & cool buildings miles away. It creates clean, renewable power, saves commercial & residential users' money, and significantly improves air quality. Those numbers have been presented to this committee by far more enlightened speakers than I, so I won't repeat them. Today I will focus on two key points that need to be made.

- The District Thermal Loop is an innovative approach to energy generation that will revolutionize the way we think of waste products. Waste is a resource that has value and this one has significant value. But getting users to think outside the box takes time and incentives. It's the way many new ideas have been developed and matured in our society. In 10 years, what we are doing today will be commonplace. But for those out front, those pioneers in innovation, some government support is necessary and in this case, the need to give this project Class 1 Renewable Energy Credits. If we are using renewable energy sources to turn a waste product (in this case heat) into another source of renewable energy that will shut down natural gas and oil boilers in commercial buildings, save money and improve air quality, it's a no brainer on many levels!

- And equally important is the image transformation this project will have in Connecticut's largest city. For too long, Bridgeport has been the stepchild to other urban communities, getting less support for some of its major initiatives. I do not come here to disparage any other city's projects. I am thankful the Connecticut General Assembly has supported them. But as Bridgeport steps out to become a model sustainable city in America, we need our State Legislature to recognize this innovation, recognize this transformation and support what will surely become a national model.

Over the past few years, the Connecticut Legislature has taken enormous strides to keep pace and in some cases lead the nation in recognizing the value of renewable energy generation, product stewardship and other forward thinking environmental initiatives. This one will add tremendously to your legacy and help Bridgeport become a model for innovation. And will help transform the image we are seeking to create. In the past two years alone, several foreign delegations have come to our Eco-Technology Park to see what we are doing and when they hear about the proposed District Thermal Loop, they all want to know how they can implement one back home.

That's a testament to the innovation and transformation we are promoting here today and we hope you will give us the tools to make this project economically viable. Without your support, this vision will remain on the drawing board for another state or city to lead the way.

Most respectfully,

Paul Timpanelli  
President, Bridgeport Regional Business Council