

Connecticut General Assembly – Environment Committee Public Hearing March 13, 2017
House Bill No. 6329 AN ACT CONCERNING HYDRAULIC FRACTURING WASTE IN CONNECTICUT.

To Chairs Senator Kennedy, Senator Miner, Representative Demicco and members of the committee,

Thank you for considering my testimony as a resident of Tolland, a Connecticut town. I support this bill and urge a strengthening of the language: we must ban hydraulic fracturing waste for gas and also for all oil and gas drilling and extractions wastes.

No one in Connecticut wants to suffer the costs of toxic, radioactive fracking waste impacting our health, contaminating aquifers and soil, and threatening our property values and public infrastructure. Now, our state legislators have a chance to protect Connecticut in the only way possible: with an outright ban on importing oil & gas drilling wastes from other states. Current law must be changed to stop the CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection from submitting regulations for review as early as this summer.

We know the toxins in this waste can cause many types of cancer, birth defects, neurological and multiple organ damage, developmental problems and embryo toxicity. Radium226 has a radioactive half-life of 1,600 years, and decays into other radioactive progeny, and finally, lead. The quantity of Radium 226 is often under reported because the simple test for it requires a transparent sample. The cost of adequately testing for, treating or attempting to remediate contaminated land and water, far outstrip any economic gains from bringing this waste into Connecticut.

Citizens in eleven towns across Connecticut, with full knowledge of thousands of spills, radioactive and chemical contamination, and failure of regulations in other states, have passed strong town ordinances banning this toxic waste. Over thirty other towns across Connecticut have citizen groups actively working on similar bans. That number grows each week.

These bans are passing in towns with strong, bipartisan support. Connecticut residents know that regulations can't prevent accidents and spills. Regulations don't assure waste is tested or treated properly. Regulations don't provide oversight of many out-of-state sub-contractors who handle over a billion of gallons of liquid and millions of tons of solid waste each year. Connecticut is one of the smallest and most densely populated states in the nation, and its residents are working hard to protect their towns one at a time, but what we really want to see is a permanent ban from the Connecticut General Assembly. A watershed, a river, an aquifer extends past a single town's border; Connecticut needs protection that covers every acre of our state.

I ask that the language of this bill be strengthened to include all waste from both oil & gas drilling and extraction, as the waste from hydraulic fracturing for oil is no less toxic than the waste from hydraulic fracturing for gas. Include the waste from all drilling and extraction methods, such as drilling muds, drilling cuttings, chemicals used to clean equipment, acidation chemicals, brine fallout from underground gas and LPG storage, as these additional wastes can share the same toxic qualities as waste that was generated from the hydraulic fracturing process. We don't want the oil and gas industry to use semantics to find loopholes in your legislation.

Thank you for drafting this important bill and for doing everything in your power to make it a strong bill that protects all Connecticut residents. After passing out of committee, please work in your caucuses to ensure its passage.

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