

To: Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee

From: Elizabeth Ostwald, Resident of Willimantic, Connecticut

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 6329 Concerning Hydraulic Fracturing Waste in Connecticut

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on the need to permanently ban the importation of fracking waste into our state. Fracking, also known as hydraulic fracturing, is the process of pumping fluid into ground to create fractures in rock for the production of natural gas and oil. The entire drilling and extraction process creates huge amounts of liquid and solid hazardous wastes. While fracking itself is not likely in Connecticut, our state could become a dumping ground for the unwanted waste produced from fracking in other states.

Concern over fracking waste let the State legislature to adopt a temporary moratorium on fracking waste last session, and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) is working to adopt regulations for fracking waste and submit them for review. Fracking waste contains toxic chemicals, environmental toxins, and hazardous contaminants that are known to cause multiple cancers, organ damage, and other serious health problems. Instead of regulating it, we should keep it out of our state altogether.

The drilling and extraction process of even a single shale well can produce over a million gallons of toxic radioactive wastewater and hundreds of tons of potentially radioactive solid waste. Oil and gas drilling wastes are a toxic mixture of carcinogens (naphthalene, benzene, acrylamide and radium - causing breast, bone, liver and other cancers) environmental toxins (toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylene - causing nervous system, kidney or liver harm) and contaminants (arsenic, lead, hexavalent chromium and radioactive radium). Worse, some of the chemicals are "proprietary," so we don't even know what they contain. Yet, waste byproducts and brine from wells are used in some states for de-icing roads, as construction fill and brownfield capping. Concern over this prospect has led multiple towns to enact their own bans on fracking waste. But we are a small state, and we are all downstream.

We must ban hydraulic fracturing waste for gas and also for all oil and gas drilling and extractions wastes. Thank you for your work moving us to that goal.

Elizabeth Ostwald
Windham, CT

--

Liz Ostwald