

Connecticut General Assembly - Environment Committee
Public Hearing March 13, 2017

House Bill 6329 AN ACT CONCERNING HYDRAULIC FRACTURING WASTE IN
CONNECTICUT

I support this bill. I also suggest strengthening the language: to ban hydraulic fracturing waste for gas and also for all oil and gas drilling and extraction wastes.

I live in Andover, one of the 11 Connecticut towns which have passed ordinances banning fracking waste. As I circulated a petition in Andover in support of an ordinance, I found that residents were overwhelmingly inclined to sign the petition when they learned about the dangers of fracking waste. At the subsequent Town Meeting, over 100 voters attended - an impressively large turnout for our small town. The ordinance passed by a unanimous, bipartisan vote.

Other towns have had similar results. Voters in our neighboring town of Coventry also passed their ordinance unanimously. And in Hebron, over 700 residents have signed a petition asking their Board of Selectmen to create an ordinance banning fracking waste in their town.

There are currently many other Connecticut towns which are actively working towards creating ordinances, and multiple additional towns which are interested in beginning the process. I mention all of this because it demonstrates that Connecticut residents, when they are informed, do not want fracking waste in their communities.

This waste contains a cocktail of toxic and carcinogenic chemicals, some of which are known to us, and others which we don't know since the oil and gas industry does not have to disclose all the chemicals they use. When the waste returns to the surface from the wells, it is also radioactive. When these elements enter the environment, they then enter the water supply, the food chain, and ultimately human bodies.

The risks to public health are many, and they are serious. Multiple kinds of cancer, developmental problems, neurological damage, multiple organ damage and birth defects are attributed to the toxins and radioactive elements. These risks have been well documented.

Water contamination, watershed contamination, permanently poisoned aquifers, contaminated croplands, plants that absorb the contaminants, and animals being poisoned by ingesting those plants and drinking contaminated water - these are all very real possibilities if fracking waste, and oil and gas drilling and extraction wastes are permitted in Connecticut.

I urge the Environment Committee to strengthen and pass this bill out of committee for a vote of the full legislature.

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