



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 5103 AN ACT REQUIRING AN EVALUATION OF  
THE STATE'S ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE LAW**

**AND SB 99 AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE AND DISTRIBUTION OF  
POLYSTYRENE PRODUCTS**

To: Honorable Senator Cohen, Representative Demicco, Ranking Members Miner, Harding and distinguished members of the Environment Committee,

From: Anne Hulick, Connecticut Director, Clean Water Action/Clean Water Fund

**HB 5103: AN ACT REQUIRING AN EVALUATION OF THE STATE'S ENVIRONMENTAL  
JUSTICE LAW**

Clean Water Action is a national, environmental advocacy non-profit organization focusing on protecting our nation's waters and preventing pollution that harms public health, wildlife and the environment. An integral pillar of our work is acknowledging and correcting the systemic environmental injustices that have contributed to the siting of polluting facilities in low income and communities of color, disproportionately burdening residents in these communities with toxic pollution.

Connecticut's 2008 environmental justice law was a good first step in the right direction to identify and address overly-burdened communities in like Hartford, Bridgeport, Waterbury, New Haven but we need to do more. Hartford's aging, trash to energy plant is not only an eyesore in our state's Capitol but a 24/7 high-polluting trash incinerator that collects waste from 70 towns across Connecticut to be burned and subsequently inhaled by Hartford residents. Hartford's residents deal with high rates of asthma and poor air quality which is exacerbated by this incinerator.

Waterbury communities also face significant pollution threats. In 2017, F&G LLC expanded their waste hauling operations in Waterbury from 100 tons a day to 700 tons a day, increasing polluting truck traffic through the low-income, Hispanic communities in the South End—already one of the most polluted neighborhoods in Connecticut.

HB 5103 strengthens current law by mandating, rather than encouraging, that developers conduct community engagement forums and blocking proposals if local residents' voices don't have an opportunity to be heard. Mitigation activities include environmental education, diesel pollution reduction, and support for open spaces. HB 5103 proposes additional activities such as the establishment of a wellness clinic, ongoing asthma screening, air monitoring performed by a licensed environmental professional, an ongoing traffic study and watercourse monitoring.

**We applaud the Committee's leadership in raising this bill and support passage of HB 5103.**

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**SB 99 AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE AND DISTRIBUTION OF POLYSTYRENE PRODUCTS**

Polystyrene products are extremely detrimental to health and the environment, often used as single-use containers and discarded. Polystyrene is a neurotoxin and probable carcinogen and plastic production is directly connected to climate change as 99% of plastics are derived from fossil fuels. U.S. waters and shorelines are littered with millions of tons of single-use plastic. Ninety-one percent of the plastic we use is not recycled and instead ends up in landfills or the ocean, polluting oceans, waterways and harming wildlife and our waters.

Polystyrene does not biodegrade, lasting for years in the environment. Connecticut's beaches and waterways are littered with polystyrene products. Clean Water Action strongly supports all measures to eliminate plastic and polystyrene food service items such as, but not limited to, food containers, plates, bowls, beverage cups and lids, utensils, straws, insulated beverage cups and bowls, clamshell food containers, and trays.

**We strongly urge your support and passage of SB 99.**

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anne B. Hulick".

Anne Hulick, RN, MS, JD

Connecticut Director, Clean Water Action