

To: Chairs Senator Cohen and Representative Gresko, Vice Chairs Senator Slap and Representative Palm, and to all Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee

From: Elisabeth Holder -- Middletown

I am writing in support of HB 6551. As a retired high school Earth Science teacher who spent 20 years teaching earth and environmental science, I have followed issues relating to pollution and climate change for decades. In addition, I have served on Middletown's Commissions on Urban Forestry and that on Conservation and Agriculture for a decade.

I think it is apparent to most people by now that the world's warming climate is hurtling toward a tipping point and that urgent action is needed to avert climate disaster. In addition the degradation of air quality through polluting infrastructure and transportation methods has had tangible costs for many decades. HB 6551 could address some of these problems by addressing the causes of air pollution in some of Connecticut's poorest cities, where respiratory ailments are at their highest. Connecticut ranks in the bottom tenth of states for smog and ground-level ozone pollution. The costs of this in health care run to millions of dollars; the cost in disruption to people's lives cannot be calculated. Here in Middletown there is a plan to add new generators to an existing plant, located in a valley where air pollution is already at unhealthy levels.

I ask you to make HB 6551 as comprehensive as possible for reducing air pollution, reducing burning of fossil fuels, requiring efficiency in utilization of waste heat for nearby buildings, increasing green energy solutions, and addressing climate injustice in communities that have borne disproportionate burdens of air pollution for far too long.

Thank you for your attention to my testimony.

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