

Dear Environment Committee member,

I care deeply about the health of my community and the environment. I am worried about the impacts that pollution has had and will have on my community if bold action is not taken at the state level. That is why I am urging you to strengthen HB 6551 AN ACT CONCERNING ENVIRONMENTAL AIR QUALITY.

HB 6551 supports Connecticut's environmental justice statute by giving DEEP and Siting Council the legal power they need to deny hazardous permits in environmental justice communities--communities that have borne the historic burden of polluting facilities such as trash incinerators, sewage treatment plants, and more. HB 6551 also calls for establishment of an environmental equity working group to assist the state in identifying the most environmentally distressed communities. What HB 6551 seeks to do to help our communities is significant, but more must be done.

I support an amended HB 6551. Those amendments should include (1) accountability to the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA); (2) citizen enforcement of the GWSA pursuant to the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act; (3) fees for certain permit applications to cover costs to provide environmental justice programs or technical assistance to applicants and overburdened communities; (4) requiring community involvement in negotiations of Community Environmental Benefit Agreement; (5) and ensuring the state's definition of environmental justice communities and affecting facilities is comprehensive.

This is your opportunity to take REAL action to support public health in our communities and mitigate climate change in a meaningful way. Please do not let this opportunity slip away.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ms. Elaine Welch

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