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**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**ENVIRONMENT
PART 1
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**2012
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CHAIRMEN: Senator Meyer
Representative Roy

MEMBERS PRESENT:

SENATORS: Maynard, Roraback

REPRESENTATIVES: Backer, Camillo, Chapin,
Fox, Greene, Hennessy,
Hurlburt, Hwang,
Luxenberg, Megna,
Lawrence Miller,
Philip Miller, Miner,
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Piscopo, Rose, Ryan,
Shaban, Urban,
Christopher Wright,
Elissa Wright

REP. ROY: (Inaudible). However, Commissioner
Esty, you are number one on our list.
Proceed, please.

COMMISSIONER DANIEL ESTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Thank you, Chairman Meyer, Ranking Member
Chapin, and when Senator Roraback arrives, I
wanted to greet him as well. It's a special
pleasure to be with you.

It is, as Senator Meyer indicated, really a
joy to see the kind of interest that this
Committee has gotten in the legislation before
it. And it's really a pleasure for me to have
an opportunity to testify before you today and
to answer questions.

And I did, before jumping into that, want to
make special note of the fact that this
Committee will see new leadership in the year
ahead, so this is my last chance to thank not
only Chairman Roy but the two Ranking Members

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as well, both of whom are moving on to new opportunities over the coming year.

So thank you, and it has been a great pleasure working across party lines and across executive legislative lines to make sure that we made progress on so many fronts.

I am joined today by Deputy Commissioner Macky McCleary and Bureau Chief Bill Hyatt, who is standing in for Deputy Commissioner Susan Frechette, who is ill today. And I'm happy to have either of these gentlemen or several of our further Bureau Chiefs answer questions if there is a level of detail that you'd like to get into.

I'd like to offer testimony on the five department bills and a quick comment on the City of Hartford's mattress bill, if I can today.

So let me start, if I could, Mr. Chairman, with Senate Bill 85, which is AN ACT CONCERNING CAMPGROUND RESERVATIONS AT CERTAIN STATE PARKS. As I think you know, there has been some controversy over a longstanding rule that limits people to a 21-day stay. That requirement had not been enforced until this past summer. And that caused some angst among people who were used to longer stays.

And it was pointed out to us, and this is in the spirit of our wanting to take on board comments and to be thoughtful about how we implement regulations, that while that restriction made sense during the prime season, July and August, when people staying longer than that time would crowd out others and perhaps that would mean they did not get a camping vacation, it did not make sense out of

the July/August peak period where there was often vacancy.

So we are simply trying to reflect that principle, which is the 21-day limit applies in the peak season but not in the off-peak season in this bill.

Second of all is House Bill 5127. This is AN ACT DEFINING THE HIGH TIDE LINE FOR THE TIDAL, COASTAL, AND NAVIGABLE WATERS OF THE STATE. This is a bill to try and sharpen and clarify the regulatory jurisdiction of our department.

It is part of our broader effort, which I spoke to some of you, Representative Piscopo and a few others, yesterday about, which is our goal to make this department more transparent, more predictable, and clearer in its regulatory framework so as to move things more quickly and ensure that the regulated community is getting appropriate service from our regulators in the state government.

And this is really a critical technical bill. It was worked out with the professional surveyors. So it's something we have gotten the support of the professional community that's responsible here to sharpen the lines and avoid having people tramping around beaches trying to figure out where seaweed is sitting as a way to define high tide lines.

The third bill I would like to offer a comment on, if I could, is House Bill 5129. This is AN ACT CONCERNING THE REGULATION OF CERTAIN LOW EMISSIONS VEHICLES, IONIZING RADIATION, STREAM CHANNEL ENROACHMENT.

A VOICE: (Inaudible).

SENATOR FRANTZ: Not that I know of. Senator Fasano may know more about that, because this, I believe, was crafted after Tropical Storm Irene came through. So he may have had some contact with members of DEEP, but I did not, and I was not contacted.

REP. HWANG: And would you also think that from a standpoint of local control, local communities, is it not an issue that you're sensitive to in the town of Greenwich as well as various towns in Fairfield, we're all trying to address this issue on a local issue.

Wouldn't you think that would be a better resolution than a statewide one-size-fits-all formula?

SENATOR FRANTZ: That's an interesting question. I think in some areas, particularly in the area of erosion, you may have to have some state statutes in place to deal with it, because it's an entire coastline that we're talking about.

But in terms of the actual dealing with sea walls and structures that come close to the water, setbacks, we have CMA already, but, yes, CMA is basically controlled by the local municipalities and towns through their planning and zoning boards.

So I do agree, we should always err on the side of giving local control, but some of these bigger issues, I do understand the need for a more macro policy that makes sense.

SENATOR MEYER: Representative Miller.

REP. PHILIP MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Senator, for testifying. I think it was seen earlier, especially when we spoke

to Senator Fasano, that clearly there's some language here that needs to be reworked.

Any bill that would bring up the specter of the Kelo New London situation and eminent domain certainly is a little bit too alarming for our tastes.

My question is though where the intent of this bill is not to look at the past storms like Storm Irene, since we all recognize, and any of our emergency management people can tell you, that we are statistically overdue for a category three hurricane in Connecticut, never mind two or one.

And Irene was just a storm. Of course, because of each storm's uniqueness and its orientation and bearing and all of that, there were some areas that it really hit pretty hard.

My question is, is the intent of this bill would be going forward to note repetitive damage, and in noting repetitive damage, if you see an area that is decimated in one storm after another, do you see the benefit to having perhaps local land use commissions be able to use that actual data as something that would help them to determine reconstruction scenario?

SENATOR FRANTZ: I think so. If you take a more extreme geographical location such as the Outer Banks of North Carolina, we've seen them be devastated year, or storm after storm. And what they've done down there, as we all know, is they've built up the houses on stilts, and they've prohibited building in certain areas. And that does make sense.

But I think given that we do have that buffer of Long Island Sound, Long Island itself between them, you know, across Long Island Sound, you know, I think a category three would undoubtedly be harmful, but it wouldn't be as bad as it would be down in say North Carolina along their coastline.

So I'm trying to think, I'm hard pressed to think of an area along the Connecticut coastline where there has been that repetitive damage. As Senator Fasano said before, the destruction that he saw during Irene and afterwards was on par with what happened in 1938. That's a pretty good period of time.

So I just, you know, it's an excellent question, but I just can't see it being all that applicable to the Connecticut coastline.

REP. PHILIP MILLER: Okay. Thank you, and I'm glad you mentioned the Outer Banks of North Carolina. You may know that there's a professor at Duke, widely known, Orrin Pilkey, who is one of the world's foremost coastal geologists, and he was behind much of the action that local municipalities in the state of North Carolina took to protect the Outer Banks and human habitation there.

And one of the other experts in the world in this type of coastal geology is right here at Wesleyan, Dr. Peter Patton. And I hope all of us may get a chance to avail of ourselves of some of his research as well. But in the meantime, thank you for your testimony.

SENATOR FRANTZ: Thank you.

SENATOR MEYER: Any other questions? Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR FRANTZ: Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR MEYER: Our next witness is going to be Dick Barlow followed by Representative Adinolfi.

A VOICE: (Inaudible).

SENATOR MEYER: Actually, I think --

A VOICE: Henry Talmage (inaudible).

A VOICE: You can't miss him. He's 6'7".

SENATOR MEYER: I think the Co-Chair said that you were, Mr. Talmage, you were going to testify next.

A VOICE: (Inaudible).

SENATOR MEYER: I'm not sure where he found that on the list, but please go ahead.

HENRY TALMAGE: Okay. Thank you. Good afternoon, Senator Meyer, Members of the Committee. I believe I was drawn number three or four, so I believe I might be in line to be here.

First of all, my name is Henry Talmage. I'm the Executive Director of the Connecticut Farm Bureau. And I'm here representing over 5,000 farm families representing all aspects of agriculture, large, small, conventional, organic, food and non-food producers across the state.

I'm here today to raise opposition to Raised Bill 5117, AN ACT CONCERNING GENETICALLY ENGINEERED FOODS as well as raising opposition to Raise Bill Number 84, AN ACT CONCERNING OUTDOOR WOOD FURNACES, which I'll speak on in a few moments.

First of all, I have submitted written testimony on both of these, and I'll talk on a couple of points here.

A VOICE: (Inaudible). Sorry.

HENRY TALMAGE: The Federal Food and Drug Administration is responsible for food labeling to ensure safety of the nation's food supply, and that includes ensure that labeling is truthful and not misleading and for regulating food activities.

Through the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, food and food ingredients using bioengineering must adhere to the same safety rules and labeling standards under the FD&C Act as their conventionally bred counterparts.

I've mentioned before the FDA has been charged with food safety and has studied these issues in depth and is determined that labeling for genetically engineered foods is not scientifically or legally warranted.

The basis for that is it has to be a material difference in nutritional value or some sort of allergy or some sort of food safety issue that runs with. Consumer right to know does not meet the justification for the food safety labeling standards that the FDA uses.

And as a result, what you end up with, we believe, is a system that really reflects the review, scientific review of the process and truthful labeling when it comes to it. Now I understand that there are those people who don't agree with that determination. And as a result, there is an attempt here today to have the state do its own mandatory labeling process.

I'm here to tell you that this has the, has ramifications on producers and food providers in the state that would add significant costs to farmers in terms of managing separate inventories, labeling, segregation, and so forth, while at the same time we have a program that, a voluntary labeling that allows for organically grown and GMO-free labeling. I'll be happy to go into some depth on this if you have some questions.

I also would like just very briefly to talk about the Act 84, AN ACT ON OUTDOOR WOOD FURNACES. Our concern with that bill has to do with the lack of agricultural exemption for legitimate agricultural production issues.

On a summer ban, there are agricultural operations who use outdoor wood furnaces for generating hot water for sanitation purposes and dairy farms. There are greenhouse operations that use root-zone heating even in May and into the early fall on rooting and propagation purposes.

And we'd like to see an exemption put in there for legitimate agricultural practices. And the larger side of things, we recognize that standards are necessary.

We think that the technology is continuing to evolve and that clean burning wood technology is something that we ought to be encouraging adoption of and making sure that our laws, well, first of all, we go after the bad offenders, but we also recognize that there's adoption of new technology that can be going. So I'm happy to answer any questions on either of those bills.

SENATOR MEYER: Just quickly, Henry, on the outdoor wood burning furnaces, as one Member of this Committee, I'd be happy to entertain an exemption for farms during the summer if a showing can be made that indeed these, for instance, are used by farmers during the summer.

And maybe you could give us some more information about that. You know, it might require a survey by you, your bureau, but some more specific information about the actual use in the summer, because in the summer, the smoke from these furnaces tends to fall.

And combined with the heat of the summer, it becomes a much bigger nuisance and also a bigger health hazard than it does at other times of the year. And that's why this bill is a very narrow bill focusing on just several months. So your help in that regard would be appreciated.

HENRY TALMAGE: Senator, we would be happy to provide some information as to how these are used for legitimate agricultural production purposes, which I think would probably address some of your concern. We're not saying an exemption for farmers to use them however they want.

We want to be able to use it as an effective, cost-effective way of managing their energy costs for legitimate agricultural production. So, and I think the other part of this is that, you know, we know there are literally thousands of these stoves in use.

The ones that are the offenders are the ones that we hear most about. But we want to make sure that we don't eliminate or find ourselves limiting this as an option for farmers but as

alternative energy options for Connecticut residents as well.

SENATOR MEYER: Okay. Anybody else?
Representative Urban from Stonington.

REP. URBAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I have some questions on the genetically modified organisms. And I'd like to preface it by saying I have been a huge supporter of farmers.

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I grew up on a dairy farm in Long Island, and I understand the problems of farmers. But unfortunately, I went to graduate school and became an economist. And there are, you know, two sides to this issue, and there's no question about it.

There is the supply side, which involves the farmers. There's the demand side which involves the consumers. But my major worry about genetically modified organisms is twofold.

One is markets work the best when the consumer has as much information as possible, and we know that. That's not something that we make up. There's no question that the market is more allocatively and productively efficient with as much information as possible that we can give the consumer.

So I think that requiring labeling is really a very positive step for making the market as efficient and effective as possible. And the other part of that is there are children who have allergies, and if we don't know what that genetic modification involves, and it's not just a situation where a tomato and a fish get together, go out on a date, and all of the sudden they exchange their DNA.

It's done, the cell has to be fooled to accept the DNA, so we can create something that could cause massive allergies in children. So I have a great concern about that also. On the supply side of the issue, in the state of Connecticut, I understand that there is genetically modified corn being used in animal feed.

But my suspicion is that most of our small farmers who are in farmers' markets which are flourishing in the state are not selling genetically modified organisms.

So I would think it would benefit our small farmers, because there's going to be a consumer preference, certainly for people who have children and children who might have allergies, for those non-genetically modified food sources.

And I also understand when we talked about that perhaps it should come from the federal government, but I don't believe I'm telling any tales out of school when I say that the federal government looks like it's in gridlock, and we haven't really gotten anything along those lines out of Washington in a long time.

And I, for one, have seen many mistakes that the FDA has made, so I'm not, you know, it doesn't make me really feel confident that I can put my faith in where the FDA is on this issue right now. Quite frankly, I think they're behind the curve.

But I would like, you know, comments certainly back from the Farm Bureau about the fact that the GMOs labeled might actually be a boon to

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our small guys in Connecticut. Thank you,
Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chairman.

HENRY TALMAGE: Could I --

SENATOR MEYER: Thank you, Representative Urban.
Do you want to reply?

HENRY TALMAGE: Yeah. Can I respond just on a few things? First of all, we believe strongly in markets as well, and we think there is an alternative, a free market alternative that exists right now in terms of voluntary labeling of pointing out that certified organic and GMO-free products are available in the marketplace and available for consumers to make that decision.

Much like the artificial growth hormone issue with our milk producers, the market in many cases determines that that's what they want and therefore has enabled producers and farmers to adapt to those market forces. So I think that's there.

I think the issue of food safety, allergies and that part of it, is frankly where the FDA concentrates its efforts on this. And I understand that you may not have confidence in the FDA, and I understand that maybe there are other people that don't.

But the vast majority, certainly from our perspective, is that that's the role that the FDA is better equipped to deal with than frankly the state government to deal with those kinds of issues.

When we talk about farmers' markets, we represent that farmers' markets are a wonderful outlet for product of, but we have to recognize that the amount of product that

is actually sold at farmers' markets compared to what's produced, we're a \$3 1/2 billion industry in the state, and although farmers' markets are very important, it represents a very tiny part of what agriculture represents in this state.

We are 100 percent behind the concept of farmers who want to produce organic, to sell organic, or GMO-free. We think that's the direction. And frankly, we see more and more of a move towards consumers and consumers' needs. We think that's better served to be voluntary than it is to make it mandatory.

And speaking of this, you know, farmers who sell in multiple states, which we have many farmers who sell in multiple states, if we have each state come up with its own labeling requirements to try to sell product into Massachusetts or Rhode Island or Connecticut, it becomes a real problem for producers.

And I know I've heard people say, well, labels don't cost much. It's not the cost of the label. It's the cost of the inventory and management and distribution when we get into these things.

And for example, a farmer who harvests a crop that he thinks is going to go to Massachusetts to a distributor finds out that that distributor doesn't want it, and he wants to ship it now to Connecticut, is he going to have to repackage that in a way, or is he going to have label requirements that are different in each state?

There's some reasons why it makes sense to do food labeling issues on a federal level. And, frankly, we're trying to encourage agriculture to grow. And our concern with this is that we

look at this as maybe a hindrance to that. Well, we have an option for voluntary labeling that can provide the consumer information those questions that you have. So sorry (inaudible).

SENATOR MEYER: Representative Moukawsher.

REP. MOUKAWSHER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You know, there's a lot of testimony that's been submitted just looking through the list. It appears there's a, you know, and I haven't been able to look at every letter, but there's a number of letters from organic growers who support labeling.

And I see you're representing the farmers in this state. Do you have organic growers in your organization as well?

HENRY TALMAGE: Yes, we do, we do.

REP. MOUKAWSHER: Yeah, so I would imagine that there's some large difference of opinion within your organization, or maybe there isn't, but I assume that this has probably been a hot issue in, you know, with your members.

HENRY TALMAGE: Well, I have to say that, you know, with diversity comes diversity of opinion. But, you know, we try to look at this as an industry-wide thing. We recognize and embrace the idea that organic production is a viable option for Connecticut producers to meet consumer demand. We're 100 percent behind that.

Like any organization, there's differences of opinion. But, you know, largely, we go through a policy development process that arrives us at a policy for the organization

using member input. And so that's how we are, you know, came up with it.

REP. MOUKAWSHER: Well, one of the things I, you know, I think we all feel is locally grown food is fresher, it's going to be healthier. I mean, it's a big selling point, I think, for people, for our local farmers.

And what I'm, you know, what I'm concerned about is whether, I mean, I, you're trying to sell healthy food to people. I mean, do you have any sense that there's anything unhealthy about genetically, you know, engineered, modified foods, or, I mean, how would you be in support of it if there was something unhealthy about it?

HENRY TALMAGE: Our position is that we actually, in our policy, support the idea of labeling GMO products where there is a material difference in nutritional or safety or allergy issues. So we support that idea.

We have faith in our FDA that they are looking at this and carefully analyzing. We heard some of the processes both from USDA, EPA, and FDA that they take this role very seriously. Now, so do we have faith in that? Yes, we do. We feel that our food supply is safe.

We feel that consumers have been consuming products that contain GMOs for a decade and especially when it comes to packaged foods that we feel that the FDA is doing its job in analyzing that, and we have great confidence in that system.

REP. MOUKAWSHER: Do you know if any other states are doing this labeling?

HENRY TALMAGE: There have been efforts to, on several states, to do, in fact, much of the language in this bill models, I believe, some that work in California. But California, Vermont, other states have looked at it.

There have been, well, there have been issues where it has not passed for reasons, one, dealing with this whole issue of kind of the federal control of this issue and kind of usurping that as well as the significant costs that it takes to monitor and to enforce and prosecute and have systems at the state level.

The expectation that this will be a program that doesn't cost the state any money, I don't think bears true at all. And I think other states that looked at it have recognized that the costs of monitoring and implementing and, you know, prosecuting and however is significant.

And so, to my knowledge, no state has passed them. There's been plenty of programs that have been debated at length with different states but nothing that I know specifically.

REP. MOUKAWSHER: Thank you for your answer.

SENATOR MEYER: Representative Miller.

REP. PHILIP MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for your testimony. I think I heard you say that you expressed the opinion in your testimony that in your, from your lay perspective that this bill was not scientifically warranted.

But I just want to clarify, I think I also heard you say that the consumer right to know does not equal the effect of this bill.

HENRY TALMAGE: What I meant was that the FDA in its deliberation in studying this question has essentially ruled that it had not been scientifically or legally warranted to require mandatory labeling of genetically engineered foods.

So that's the FDA's determination as it went through and deliberated through the scientific data. So it wasn't my opinion, it's their opinion. So, and then the other question was whether or not, oh, sorry.

The other question was whether or not the, as I understand it, the FDA, the argument has been made to the FDA that there is a consumer right to know about genetically modified foods, and therefore it should be included on the label.

And their response, as I understand it, has been through the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. It lays out specifically what criteria need to be met in order to require mandatory labeling.

And that has to do with a compelling material difference in nutritional and/or allergy-related kind of food safety issues. Consumer's right to know did not meet that obligation from those, that definition as I understand their explanation of it.

REP. PHILIP MILLER: Okay. I would just say as a comment that maybe then we need to, as a society, look philosophically, because I would say, and I don't presume to speak for anyone but myself, but I would put the consumer right to know way above the effect of this or any other bill. So thank you for your testimony.

SENATOR MEYER: Are there any other questions?
Yes, Representative Camillo.

REP. CAMILLO: Thank you, Senator. Good afternoon. Thanks for your testimony. You said before that you alluded to the cost this would be, this would amount to. And, you know, as a fiscal conservative, I listen to those things.

But in your statement, you mention that, you know, the, looking into it, monitoring this, the fines, but isn't that admitting that there actually could be a problem with this?

HENRY TALMAGE: Well, I'm saying that if you pass a law that requires labeling, and you have to therefore monitor whether or not those labels are being correctly applied, and those, in those cases where they're not being correctly applied, there has to be some ramification for that and investigation and prosecution, so my answer to that is make it voluntary.

Those who can make, substantiate that their products are GMO-free through organic or GMO-free certification then you don't have to prove everybody else is doing it right or wrong.

REP. CAMILLO: No, thank you, and I appreciate that. But, again, I, I'm just having, thinking through this, having a hard time.

HENRY TALMAGE: I think there's a distinction between whether or not products contain GMOs or not. But what we're talking about here is labeling those products that do contain GMOs.

REP. CAMILLO: Right.

HENRY TALMAGE: So with regard to monitoring and prosecution of that would be those products

that contain them today, if this law were to be passed, there would be an obligation on behalf of the state to make sure that those products that we're consuming today are labeled correctly and if not, according to the new law, then there would ramifications for that.

What I'm saying is that process is not free. In other words, it costs, it will cost the state something to do that monitoring and/or enforcement.

REP. CAMILLO: Okay. No, thanks for clearing that up. My, I guess my only take would be that when it comes to your health and safety, I would certainly rather err on the side of question, and I think that consumers do and that people do have a right to know what they're going to eat.

And I don't think we're asking something or the proponents are asking something that is outrageous. And we're all aware of mandates, we're all aware of fiscal notes, but we're talking about our health here. So I think this is a very legitimate debate, and I urge my colleagues to seriously consider it. And I thank you for your testimony.

SENATOR MEYER: Representative Urban for the second time.

REP. URBAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the second time. Just, and this will be very quick, but when we were talking about this, Europe has really basically rejected genetically modified organisms, in fact, referring to them as Frankenfoods.

And Europe tends to be much more consumer friendly than we tend to be here, and I

believe that has got a lot to do with the market models, and market models lead to market power, which leads to political power. But I won't go down that road right now.

I just would like your observations on why Europe has been so adamant to the point where we have seen some of the companies remove themselves from Europe after trying very hard to get Europe to accept genetically modified organisms. So are they ahead of the curve with us, and are we behind the curve?

HENRY TALMAGE: I don't pretend to be an expert in international, you know, policy with regard to that kind of thing. I would say that the question here is as to whether or not is the information that they are making their decision on solely based on the food safety issue, or are there other factors that come into play and trade plays that might or may not? I don't know the answer to that.

I think the question, I mean, when it comes down to us, is there, part of it is do we trust our FDA to make this decision or not? And so the answer, and part of it is, well, if then, if the answer is no, what makes us think that Connecticut has the expertise or the resources to make those decisions, and are we ready to deal with the ramifications that might come from that to deal with it?

And I'm here to say from the agricultural point of view we feel that that's an unnecessary step when today consumers can buy products that are GMO-free and make those consumer choices.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any other questions or comments from Members of the Committee? If not, thank you. Thank you, Henry.

HENRY TALMAGE: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Appreciate it. Okay. Dick Barlow. Not here. Representative Jeff Berger, are you here? I know she stopped him before. Representative Patricia Widlitz.

A VOICE: (Inaudible).

REP. ROY: She left?

A VOICE: (Inaudible).

REP. ROY: Oh. Okay. Don Tuller.

DONALD TULLER: Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, Members of the Environment Committee, my name is Don Tuller. I am President of the Connecticut Farm Bureau. My cousin, Buzz, and I operate Tulmeadow Farm in West Simsbury. We raise vegetables and grass-fed beef.

I am here to express on behalf of Farm Bureau our opposition to 5717, AN ACT CONCERNING GENETICALLY MODIFIED, ENGINEERED FOODS, and to speak to the issue of, in addition, Raised Bill 84, OUTDOOR WOOD BURNING FURNACES. Particularly, this five months is the period of that ban.

(HB5117)

So for farmers, farmer, dairy farmers do heat their hot water for cleaning their dairy systems. And, in fact, greenhouse growers, those, I would say, are the largest users potentially of outdoor wood burning furnaces.

The heating season for greenhouses goes well beyond the May 1 cutoff and also starts well before the September 30th, so that's where, and the diversity of American, of Connecticut agriculture, potentially, it could affect a

lot of other farms. We certainly can find out how many, but that's the concern about it.

But we certainly support production agriculture. We're not, you know, I, not residential uses. In regard to the issue of genetically engineered food, as a general farm organization, we support all kinds of agricultural production.

And, again, the situation in the marketplace, organic producers go through a particular protocol. They're certified. They do exact a premium in the marketplace, consumers who choose to seek out that, those products, and they are available.

The concern I have about your proposal is, I mean, I produce, manufacture ice cream too, and I have an ingredient label. And there, and I, and there's a real reason for having it there, for food allergy issues. My wife has allergies. I don't have a problem with that.

We're not big enough to need nutritional labeling, but, and when we do, I make 50 flavors of ice cream, so that's going to be a very expensive thing to do if we get big enough. But the problem with your proposal is it just says contains genetically modified organisms.

What is the consumer supposed to do with that? You know, in other words, we don't, in regard to the issue of European bans on GMOs, one thing Europe is is very protective of their own agriculture.

And I believe strongly that the basis for a big part of the GMO exclusion in Europe is because they protect their agriculture, their farmers can use more expensive production

techniques, and they will pay what it costs for that food.

They want to avoid the competition from U.S. produced grains, which by, in a large percentage are GMO. And I think that that is the real reason in spite. It's a trade barrier that they can try to, they've been trying to use and effectively use so far without getting caught as a trade barrier.

So that's my opinion about what's happening with Europe. Anyway, I just don't think, we don't try to pick, the Farm Bureau has all different classes of agriculture. Our policy, we don't pick winners and losers in commodities.

The fact that the public has such a, I think a very little understanding, the people who are interested know they can find organic and GMO-free stuff in the marketplace. The voluntary system is sufficient.

And I just think that the, that it will raise the expense for food for consumers, because there's not only going to be a cost to farmers, but there's going to be a cost to manufacturers. That is going to come right back to the consumers in Connecticut.

And we already have enough reasons why consumers are, this is a very expensive place to live already, and until you can prove the health thing, you know, that's why we are not supportive of it. Thank you.

REP. ROY: Thank you, Don. Just a little economic lesson. Several years ago, there was an additive for gasoline that was going to make cars run much more efficiently, and we'd use, we'd get many more miles with this additive in

the gasoline. So we mandated that we would put this in there.

And then shortly thereafter, or a year or so afterward, several home wells were destroyed by leakage from these, the tanks and that material. So then when we put it in, the costs went up. When we took it out, the costs went up again.

DONALD TULLER: Are you speaking of MTBE?

REP. ROY: Something like that, yeah.

DONALD TULLER: Yeah, but that was an oxygenator. That was to make it to burn more cleanly. That was not efficiency. That was to make it cleaner, actually.

REP. ROY: Okay. Anyway, whether we put it in or take it out, the price goes up. Any other questions or comments? Representative Moukawsher.

REP. MOUKAWSHER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When you were talking about Europe, there was a question about or a remark about Europe, and I was just, I've been going, looking at different things on the Internet, and there's a report dated today talking about a variety of corn grown by Monsanto. It's MON810. Are you familiar with that, or do you know anything about that?

DONALD TULLER: I'm not. I actually did tour a genetic biotech facility down in, it was a Bayer-Meyer facility down in Raleigh, North Carolina, last year. So they were doing a lot of soybean work, but I'm not that familiar with what Monsanto is doing.

REP. MOUKAWSHER: Well, it, apparently the French government at one point declared that it was a serious risk to the environment. And the case was filed in the French Court of Justice, and the French Court overturned that finding saying that there was not enough evidence to back its claims the crop posed a risk to the health of the environment.

The European Food Safety Authority also came to the same conclusion. And so I, you know, I, what you were saying, I think, in terms of, you know, protecting their agricultural, I think it's --

DONALD TULLER: That's my opinion. That's not an official position.

REP. MOUKAWSHER: Yeah, I think when there's scrutiny of these government decisions by whether it's the French Court or, the European Court of Justice ruled the same thing.

It, I think they're finding that there's something, you know, it's unsupported by the evidence that it's either bad for the environment or health. So I think what you were saying, you know, makes some sense. Thank you.

DONALD TULLER: I just wish that you could fund the government positions that you already authorized and require for regulation, particularly in the Department of Ag, get those positions filled before we add new regulations on agriculture.

REP. ROY: Thank you. I wish we could. We'll look at the budget.

DONALD TULLER: All right.

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REP. ROY: Any other questions or comments from
Members of the Committee? Seeing none --

DONALD TULLER: Thank you.

REP. ROY: -- thank you very much, Don.
Representative Jeff Berger followed by Paul
Pescatello.

REP. BERGER: Mr. Chairman, with the indulgence of
yourself and your Co-Chair and the Committee,
I have a representative from the City of
Waterbury that would like to represent the
Mayor and has a prepared statement that has
been e-mailed to the Committee. If we could
appear together.

REP. ROY: Certainly. And when we finish, have him
go to the Clerk's desk so we have the name for
the transcript.

REP. BERGER: Yes, sir.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

REP. BERGER: For the purposes of the record, my
name is Jeffrey J. Berger, Representative of
the 73rd Assembly District, State of
Connecticut. Thank you, Senator Meyer,
Representative Roy, and Committee Members.

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You've had quite a day here today, and it
continues. Certainly, the room is filled with
those that are interested in certainly any
environmental issues that affect us all in our
daily lives. And I appreciate your time.

A VOICE: (Inaudible).

REP. BERGER: And I appreciate that. Thank you.
We are here to testify in support of Senate

Bill Number 89 that is on your agenda here today.

I am here with the Public Works Director for the City of Waterbury, Lou Spina, and he has a statement from the Mayor of the City of Waterbury who was going to be here today but had some pressing business in the city, and he is duly represented by the Public Works Director. And if I can, through you, introduce Mr. Lou Spina to the Committee.

REP. ROY: Certainly. Go ahead.

LOUIS SPINA: Thank you. Representative Roy, Senator Meyer, and Members of the Committee, as Representative Berger said, my name is Lou Spina. I'm the Provisional Director of Public Works for the City of Waterbury.

I am here today to testify on behalf of Mayor O'Leary in support of S.B. 89, the ACT ESTABLISHING A MATTRESS STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM. As you heard from Hartford a little while ago, Waterbury is a member of the CRA Midcon project.

And as a result of the Hartford landfill closing two years ago, we too have struggled with the costs of disposing mattresses. On an annual basis, we pick up between six to 7,000 mattresses and box springs. We are charged a surcharge on top of the per ton tipping fee of 20 to \$30 per, and at the end of the year, it's 150 to 200,000 out of pocket on top of the per ton fee.

We've also seen since the surcharges went into effect, we've seen an increase in illegal dumping on some of the wooded areas of the city, some of the parks, you know, anywhere that's less populated.

You know, we struggle every year to build a budget that takes into consideration the needs of the residents, all the services that we do provide for them, you know.

And we try to establish a budget that works for them that gives them the level of service that they deserve while keeping the mill rate in mind. So we are here in support of that stewardship program. Thank you.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any questions or comments from Members of the Committee? Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would think one of the benefits of the bill would be to lessen the amount of littering or illegal dumping.

So thinking back to electronic waste and putting a similar system in place, is it your experience that you've seen a decrease in the amount of electrical waste products that have been disposed of improperly?

LOUIS SPINA: Absolutely. You know, now that there's an approved and responsible outlet for the residents to dispose of it, we see less of them popping up illegally. They're being handled responsibly. The residents have an outlet. They bring them to our transfer station. And we would anticipate similar results with a mattress stewardship program.

REP. CHAPIN: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Representative Phil Miller.

REP. PHILIP MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thanks to Representative Berger and Mr. Spina

for coming in today. We heard some pretty compelling testimony on this earlier from the Honorable Mayor Segarra of the great city of Hartford.

My question would be, as you've spoken to some of the manufacturers, have they expressed to you any objections to this legislation? And how do you envision if we pass this working with the manufacturers in the future?

LOUIS SPINA: I apologize. I haven't had any direct conversations with the manufacturers. I have had contact with the vendors that are in the process of being permitted from the DEP, so I could speak from their perspective. You know, they're excited.

It's an economic development for the state, city of Hartford, wherever they plan to locate. But I do apologize. I haven't had any direct contact with the manufacturers. I would speculate that they wouldn't be too thrilled about it, but --

REP. PHILIP MILLER: But you'll work with them.

LOUIS SPINA: We'll do whatever we can to --

REP. PHILIP MILLER: Okay. Thank you.

LOUIS SPINA: -- to soothe the transition, yes.

REP. PHILIP MILLER: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any other questions or comments from Members of the Committee? Seeing none, thank you very much, sir.

LOUIS SPINA: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Yup. Paul Pescatello followed by State Representative Pat, Patricia Widlitz.

PAUL PESCATELLO: Good afternoon. My name is Paul Pescatello. I am President of Connecticut United For Research Excellence or CURE. Thank you very much for this opportunity to testify in opposition to House Bill 5117, AN ACT CONCERNING GENETICALLY ENGINEERED FOODS.

CURE's mission is to represent and foster the growth of Connecticut life sciences research and life sciences technology transfer. Perhaps our most important job is to support the growth of the cluster of biotechnology and biopharma companies that CURE and all of you in the General Assembly have worked so hard to build.

As we try to underscore at every opportunity, biotech is the first, is first and foremost about cures and treatments and better ways of producing energy and food, but it's also about economic development.

There are many ways to measure the importance of economic impact of biotech but most telling is its economic multiplier effect. CURE's own studies, as well as those of many other organizations and government agencies, consistently show that biotech has about the greatest economic multiplier of any industry.

Simply put, investment in biotech, whether by private investors or governments, like Governor Malloy's recent recruitment of Jackson Laboratories to Connecticut, will have the greatest ripple effect across the Connecticut economy in terms of jobs and employment than any other industry.

I am here today to oppose H.B. 5117 on many grounds. Many are stated in our letter, submitted to this Committee, jointly signed by the national organization, the Biotechnology Industry Organization.

The existing rules and regulations of the FDA make the bill unnecessary. And given the organic labeling option, which by definition means no genetically engineered materials are present in such food, this bill would confuse rather than enlighten consumers.

But the most important reason for CURE's opposition to H.B. 5117 is that it undermines the foundation, the hospitable environment for biotech we've worked so hard to build in Connecticut.

As we and you did so astutely with stem cell research, we looked beyond the confusion and the anti-science rhetoric that our opponents sought to create and crafted legislation that broadcast to the world Connecticut's open to science, rational analysis and the high technology job opportunities of the 21st century.

There are many things to be said about genetically engineered/modified foods, but their essential quality is that they are nutritionally identical to non-GE foods.

Biotech helps us to produce more food using less land and fewer pesticides with a much lower carbon footprint, but the food itself is no different from food produced the old fashioned way.

To the extent food is modified in such a way that it is nutritionally different or has the potential to expose consumers to allergens,

existing law requires it to be labeled as such. May I just finish up very quickly?

A VOICE: (Inaudible).

PAUL PESCATELLO: Today, biotechnology, as it is applied to food production, is part of a centuries-long continuum using science, from monks employing Mendelian genetics to Nobel Laureate Norman Borlaug's post World War II green revolution.

The science of food production has allowed us to feed the hungry and free most of us from the need to farm, allowing us to use our time, talents, and treasure for other pursuits.

Connecticut is a high-cost state but one with much high value added intellectual property to sell to the world. High living standards, the high living standards we enjoy in Connecticut depend on our creating more of that intellectual property.

We must continue to be confidently known as a hospitable place to science and rational analysis, as a state that welcomes scientific research and researchers. 5117 would undermine that message and should be opposed. Thank you for this opportunity, and I'd be happy to take any questions.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any questions or comments from Members of the Committee? Thank you very much.

PAUL PESCATELLO: Thank you.

A VOICE: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Representative Widlitz followed by Cathie Iaccarino.

REP. WIDLITZ: Good afternoon. It's nice to spend time with this Committee. I kind of miss being on this Committee. You have a lot of interesting issues, and it's a little bit different from the Finance Committee.

For the record, my name is Patricia Widlitz. I'm the State Representative for the 98th District representing parts of the towns of Guilford and Branford. And I'm here in support of Senate Bill 89, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MATTRESS STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM.

As many of you may recall, I've been a strong advocate of extended producer responsibility legislation, which holds producers responsible for the cost of recycling or disposing of their products at the end of their life use.

Connecticut has already passed producer responsibility legislation for electronics and most recently architectural paint and coatings. S.B. 89 extends that responsibility to the producers of mattresses.

This legislative proposal is structured very much similarly to Public Act 11-24, which was the Paint Stewardship Program. It requires producers of mattresses sold in Connecticut to establish a nonprofit organization with a fee structure that covers the cost of collection, transport, and recycling or disposal of their products.

The plan that the organization designs will require approval by the Commissioner of DEEP and will be audited on a regular basis to ensure that the fee does not exceed the cost of implementing the plan.

The benefits of this legislation are significant. First, municipalities will save money. The DEP surveyed municipalities and estimates the annual costs of \$1.2 million for municipal mattress disposal.

The weight of discarded mattresses also accounts for a large percentage of the cost of the tipping fees. And that cost is covered by local taxes and fees. It will also decrease, as we've heard in previous testimony, the unsightly dumping of discarded mattresses.

Our recycling rates will increase consistent with the state solid waste management plan. And already two recycling plants are currently being permitted in Bridgeport and Bloomfield. Jobs will be created and sustained by providing a steady stock of material for recycling.

I'll also mention that it's likely there will be resistance from some sectors of the industry who will argue that a national policy is preferable. Our experience is that we heard the same argument from the electronics industry, but that national policy never came to fruition.

Had we waited, we would still be waiting, and our landfills around the country would still be filling up with toxic waste. Fortunately, Connecticut and many other states took the initiative. We should lead the way on this issue as well. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any questions or comments?
Representative Phil Miller.

REP. PHILIP MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome, Representative Widlitz.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you.

REP. PHILIP MILLER: And we have heard from several mayors who were in favor of this, and I was asking them if they had spoken with the manufacturers and were aware of any objections or also how they envisioned working with the manufacturers to make this happen. Can you enlighten us on any of this at all?

REP. WIDLITZ: Well, I haven't been part of that working group to this point, but it's my understanding that there have been manufacturers at the table at various times and discussions. Some are supportive, some are not.

In my experience in negotiating the electronics recycling bill, once the bill came out of committee, everybody knew it was serious. They came running to the table, because they want to be part of the conversation at that point. We had everyone together, and we worked it out.

So I think, you know, it's important for this Committee to get the bill out of Committee. Then it's a serious bill, and we finish tweaking whatever we need to do to make it work.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any other questions?
Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So under the proposal you envision that there would be a nonprofit perhaps who would submit this plan to DEEP and hopefully get it approved for some sort of a facility.

And then how do the mattresses actually get from my home to this facility, or do you envision multiple facilities, or do you think that the towns continue to play a role in transporting them there?

REP. WIDLITZ: Okay. Well, first, let me clarify that the plan would not require them to build a facility. These are private enterprises that are coming on board. They're in the permitting line now to have to build those facilities.

The plan would be very similar to what we did with the paint stewardship bill where there would be a, the cost of collecting, transporting any of the recycling or disposing of the product would be part of the plan that the organization puts forward.

And their costs for doing that would not be allowed to exceed the costs of running the program. And all of that is audited on a regular basis. The plan has to be approved by the DEEP Commissioner, and it gets, it's audited on a regular basis.

REP. CHAPIN: But with the paint, I believe the consumer has the responsibility to deliver the unused paint, isn't that correct, back to a --

REP. WIDLITZ: It's a little easier to carry the paint around than to get the mattress back, but --

REP. CHAPIN: Right. So in the case of the mattress, does it still go to the town's transfer station, and then in bulk, do they all end up somewhere else?

REP. WIDLITZ: Yes, yes. It would, they would be deposited at the transfer station. Someone

could drop off a mattress if they were able to do that. I believe it would also allow, in the case of the municipality going to a place to pick up a mattress, they would be allowed to charge a fee for doing that.

But the costs of actually transporting the mattress to the recycling facility or disposal facility would be borne by this nonprofit organization.

REP. CHAPIN: And, again, modeled after the Paint Stewardship Program where it would just be self-sustaining and no profit making?

REP. WIDLITZ: Correct.

REP. CHAPIN: Thank you.

REP. WIDLITZ: And it also doesn't involve, it doesn't entangle our own agencies in operating the program, which is a little bit different from the electronics recycling. We get better as we go forward, and I'm sure this is the wave of the future.

I think it's, the European Union is way ahead of us in product, in manufacturer responsibility for the end-of-life products, and I think we're moving more in that direction.

REP. CHAPIN: Thank you.

REP. WIDLITZ: Mm-hmm.

REP. CHAPIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any other questions or comments from Members of the Committee? Representative Moukawsher. Yeah.

REP. MOUKAWSHER: Thank you, and I got to witness some of your work on these other issues before, and I'm sure at some point you'll be broke on your final agreement in this. But I was wondering, it seems like the bigger, one of the big problems is, in the municipalities is that mattresses are abandoned, you know, in alleys or on properties.

And I think their expense concerns have to do with that, that collection of them, and will this address that in any way, or is this something the manufacturers would have to contribute towards the cost of collecting these abandoned mattresses?

REP. WIDLITZ: You know, that's an interesting question that we'll have to look into more, because you're absolutely right. And many of the cities don't require a fee, and they, or they have regular municipal pickup.

I believe the City of Hartford already has a weekly pickup of mattresses that people can just put outside on the sidewalk. And they already incur that cost. I'm not sure how that would be negotiated, but we could certainly address that.

REP. MOUKAWSHER: Okay. Yeah, because that's, I think that's one of the, I mean, prior to our hearing today, I've seen articles with pictures of abandoned mattresses and, you know, what a blight that is and a burden it is on municipalities. So I just wondered how that worked, but I'm sure you'll get to that and --

REP. WIDLITZ: And the other issue is some of the municipalities that charge a fee for dropping a mattress off at a transfer station, some people to avoid that fee will take it into the

city or a place where, you know, there is regular pickup and dump it illegally.

REP. MOUKAWSHER: All right. Thank you very much.

REP. WIDLITZ: Mm-hmm.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any other questions or comments from Members of the Committee? Pat, thank you very much.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Cathie Iaccarino followed by Representative Al Adinolfi.

CATHIE IACCARINO: Good afternoon, Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, and Committee. I am here to support the genetically modified food bill, H.B. 5117. Labeling is a common practice and one that the American consumer shops by.

When a product has been changed, it is labeled, which seems to be a simple, straightforward, honest, and logical process. It allows the consumer the opportunity to exercise their right of freedom of choice and right to know what they are buying.

We label milk when it has been modified from whole to skim to two percent to lactose free. There's no problem with that, no lawsuits pending. GMOs should be labeled. The product has been modified. People have the choice.

If they like GMO products, they can choose to purchase them. If they don't like GMO products, they can choose not to purchase them. This is not something that should literally be made into a federal case.

I understand that you are faced with a legal and financial quagmire, especially since corporations have been politically modified to be labeled as people. (Inaudible).

But bottom line, what has not been changed is that corporations provide a service or product, in this case food, that we, the original species of people, purchase, and we have the right to know and to choose what we are paying for. Thank you.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any questions or comments from Members of the Committee? Cathie, thank you. I'll ask the audience, no applause, no booing or anything of that nature. Try to keep the decorum here. Representative Adinolfi, and he will be followed by Tim Phelan.

REP. ADINOLFI: Good morning, Chairmen Meyer and Roy, Ranking Members Roraback and Chapin, and other Members of the Environmental Committee. Most of you know me. I'm Al Adinolfi. I represent the 103rd District.

SB85

I originally put in a request for a bill to change some of the camping laws. The bill did come out, but it didn't come out close to what I put in for, and I want to clear up, even though I say in my testimony that I support it, I don't support it as written. I want to just tell you how I feel about it.

The goal of this bill is to clarify that 21 days in and five days out rule for camping at shore parks. I would like to speak shortly about my original request for this legislation. The state loses a bundle of money for not adhering to the program that was in place for over 20 years.

The program that has existed for so many years worked well and was fair to every camper. A few families, less than 25, took advantage of the rule by using different names and identification.

This forced the implementation of an old law that somebody found, I think it was back in the '80s, that went in and brought it up that this rule did not apply that has been in effect. Why should we penalize thousands of campers for a few violators of the rules implemented by the camp director?

I strongly recommend that we continue to adhere to the rule that has been in place for many years, 21 one days in and five days out. It's worked well. There hasn't been anything against it. And what we're doing now is limiting the campers where they could base where there's no legal warrants.

And we did set up a timeframe of when it was open to anybody as long as it was vacant. But I think we didn't do our homework, and I'm not saying you or whoever did, that maybe if there's a month too early in the springtime, really camping starts around Fourth of July weekend and ends Labor Day.

And here we're going, Memorial Day we're putting a restriction, plus we got a restriction that they can't ever come back again. If they can't come back again, we're going to have empty spots. I think that they pay in advance, almost a year in advance for these camp spots, and I think it's something like \$40 a day.

So there's a lot of money involved there, and I think we ought to relook at the bill and

maybe amend it before we bring it up to the floor. Thank you very much.

REP. ROY: Thank you, Al. Any questions or comments from Members of the Committee? Seeing none, thank you.

REP. ADINOLFI: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Tim Phelan to be followed by Representative John Hetherington.

TIM PHELAN: Hello. How are you? Good afternoon, Representative Roy and Members of the Environment Committee, Representative Chapin and others. As you know, my name is Tim Phelan. I'm the President of the Connecticut Retail Merchants Association.

We're a statewide trade association representing thousands of retailers throughout Connecticut. We include, our members include some of the world's largest retailers and the state's Main Street merchants.

I'm here today to testify specifically on House Bill 5117, but I did also want to make, if I could, some comments about Raised Bill Number 89.

A VOICE: You have three minutes.

TIM PHELAN: Okay. So for House Bill 5177, I would just, in the interest of time, let you know that our concerns and our opposition to this bill is although we're not experts in the area of food manufacturing, some of our members will have the direct contact with end users, customers who will be purchasing the food in question.

I think the co-chairs might verify to you that we have come to them several times over the last three years with four or five very -- what we think are very good proposals that would mit -- that would put this whole controversy to bed and improve the system, and we'll continue to do that, because as far as we've been the ones who are suggesting, you could limit new installations to only certain models that would meet very rigorous particulate matter standards. They would be very clean, and nothing new could be installed unless it's like that.

So I think the time -- I think there are a lot of items that could be -- should be on the table, and I think that's a good suggestion on your part.

REP. P. MILLER: Okay. Thank you. And, you know, it's clear that these arrest beneficial product in the right situation. I mean, for a number of people who have wood lots, it's a renewable resource. And when burned cleanly and efficiently, you can heat very well for a good savings, so thanks for your testimony.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any other questions or comments from members of the --

A VOICE: (Inaudible) Steve Swenson, Steve Swenson.
(Inaudible).

JEFF BARSKE: Representative Roy, Senator Ed Meyer, members of the Environment Committee, for the record, my name is Jeff Barske from the Town of Thompson. I'm also the. I'm also the Thompson Town Clerk by profession. I'm here to testify on SB 85 about campground limitations.

I've camped at Hammonasset for 57 of my 59

years and consider myself well acquainted with the camping law and the practices of DEP park management.

The current SB 85 proposed limiting camping to 21 days between Memorial Day and Labor Day, this would be highly restrictive compared to the practice of the last 40 years, namely, allowing camping families to reserve a campsite for 21 days in maximum one-time stay, followed by five days out of the park.

For much of June, the latter part of August and from Labor Day to the end of the season in okay, campsites are readily available, and as a matter of fact, on July 28th last year, the Facebook site of Hammonasset heralded we have 91 campsites available. Come on down.

The legislation is probably based on complaints of lots not being available at peak times. I would say that campsites can be reserved 11 months ahead of time. A family that plans their vacations ahead of time, as most of us do for holiday trips and any other vacation time away, has plenty of time to reserve campsites at these shoreline parks.

At (inaudible) campsites are in commodity in the beginning of July and all the more reason for those that are interested in camping in July need to come and reserve as early as they can, and the rule of first come, first served seems to be fair.

To legislate camping to only 21 days seems overkill, especially since anyone visiting the parks in June and late August, as I said, there's plenty of open sites. So why turn away able and willing campers willing to reserve and pay for them months ahead of time.

A lot of this resulted in campground management recently reinterpreting 23-16a, saying we could only camp 21 days all year. So we need to change 23-16a definitely.

So my reference is to keep the current practice, which has worked for 40 years, to a 21-day maximum, five-day out. On-site camp management could police those families who abuse the 21-day rule by booking campsites under other family names or making overlapping reservations.

Another option would be, perhaps less preferable, would be to change the limit to 28 days and make it from a period between July 1st and Labor Day. Commissioner Esty himself sort of took the month of June out of the -- out of the bill in his testimony really just talking about July and August.

So perhaps a 28-day limit for those two months, as most of us consider summer vacation in July and August.

And a third option would be to said set aside part of the park where you couldn't reserve ahead of time perhaps ten percent of the park. So for those families in Connecticut or out of state that change their vacation plans, there would be some lots available to them.

If -- if we -- if we have these restrictive limits, there will be many more campsites unused, resulting in lower revenue to the state, definitely lost revenue to shoreline businesses, and that's been well talked about along the shoreline, that many businesses do depend on these repeat campers who, because they're down at the park, very often during the summer use the restaurants, the hardware stores, the camping supplies, the Ocean State

Job lots, et cetera, and we use those businesses when we're down there, and someone who's only there for the weekend probably brings everything they need with them and aren't spending their money as much on the shoreline.

So I would hope that my testimony today would result in fair and equitable legislation and allow the state to maximize park use and keep our shoreline parks open to all who desire to enjoy the beauty and relaxation and not put limits on them, and especially to our senior citizens who have the flexibility to camp at different times in the year than perhaps a family with children, keep those park -- the availability of those campsites open to them in -- in the months of June and September.

And perhaps having some limits in the -- in the core part of the summer would be reasonable, but we'd love to have more discussion to kind of come up with a reasonable solution that all parties could agree with.

REP. ROY: Thank you, Jeff. Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER: I'm sorry, I'm just having trouble understanding why the bill in front of us doesn't accomplish what you're seeking, because what the bill does in front of us, it says that you can have -- you can have 21 days between Memorial Day and Labor Day, but you can have more under -- in two situations.

You can have more than 21 days first if between Memorial and Labor Day there's a vacancy in the campsite; and secondly, you can have more after -- before or after Memorial -- before Memorial Day or after Labor Day.

That's the way we did this bill, thinking that

that was going to meet the concerns.

JEFF BARSKE: I think what happens is, is that folks come -- some folks may come for Memorial Day for four or five days, come another couple of weeks in July, and what park management was telling us last summer was that once you hit your 21 days, you're not going to be allowed in, whether there's lots available or not.

SENATOR MEYER: That's what this bill reverses.

JEFF BARSKE: Under the system of reservations, which is done by Reserve America, you know, people -- for most people who camp with some regularity, they -- they cannot just load up their camper and drive to the park and find out whether the lots are available or not.

So it would require some work with DEEP to -- to DEEP tell us in a -- in a practical way whether the lots are available or not, so -- I know -- I know there's some other folks that, you know, have other comments, so I would probably have more discussion on this.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any other questions or comments?

Representative Larry Miller.

REP. L. MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon.

JEFF BARSKE: Hi.

REP. L. MILLER: How do they reserve a spot? What's the actual --

JEFF BARSKE: You go online or call an 800 number. It's by an outside firm called Reserve America.

REP. L. MILLER: Okay.

JEFF BARSKE: You -- so me, being somewhat PC-literate, I go on -- if I know I want it the first three weeks of July, anytime 11 months ahead of time, I can go on the computer, see if a particular campsite or a particular area is available. If it is available, it will allow me to reserve that campsite for up to 21 days.

And then you pay your money using your credit card, and the same thing is available using the 800 number

Now, what -- what we were afraid of is that for someone such as myself, that if I was there the first three weeks of July and I decided I want to come the third weekend in August, that I -- that I would not be able to do that, because I would have met my 21-day maximum.

REP. L. MILLER: Representative Adinolfi said 25 families have abused the system. Now, that's not a lot of people.

JEFF BARSKE: There's about 550 lots, I believe, at Hammonasset.

REP. L. MILLER: Yes.

JEFF BARSKE: And you're coming through the main gate and the camper's gate every day, and it's not too easy to not know who's abusing the system and whose camper maybe looks like it's been there all summer.

So, you know, on-site management seems to be certainly something that could be used to take care of, as I said, those who may overbook or put the -- after the three weeks put the next three weeks in Uncle George's name and so on

and so forth.

REP. L. MILLER: What do they require of you for identification when you book a spot?

JEFF BARSKE: You're supposed to show your driver's license, and you need car passes, so you have to give your license plates and your -- your type of equipment and license plate on the equipment, if it's a -- if it's a trailer.

If it's a tent or something like that, of course, doesn't have any identification.

REP. L. MILLER: Yes. Just trying to figure out how come 25 people -- what did they do? How did they do it?

JEFF BARSKE: The campground has gone through -- had three managers in the past three years, but the -- the manager -- the most -- the longest one ago, two ago, had been there for ten or fifteen years, and basically allowed those folks to do that they.

REP. L. MILLER: Thank you.

JEFF BARSKE: Thank you, Representative.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

Any other questions or comments?

Seeing none, thank you very much, sir.

Angela Miller, and followed by someone whose last name is Nero, I can't read the first name.

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: Hello, good evening. I think you have two letters there, so I'm going to speak fast, because I'd like to speak on behalf of Mrs. Moorehead -- I should speak on her

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behalf -- who is a 91-year-old camper.

Representative Roy, Senator Meyer, members of the Environmental Committee, for the record, my name is Ginger Angela Miller, and I and my extended family and many friends are longstanding and dedicated Hammonasset State Park campers.

I am here to voice objection to the proposed (inaudible) statute that you speak to impose, the detriment to long-term camping, as my family and friends, as well as the detriment of state and local area revenues and jobs.

My reference to a long-term camper is intended to mean people who camp at Connecticut Hammonasset State Park more than memorial -- more than 21 days during Memorial Day and Labor Day.

And to that, I'd also like to say that Memorial Day is the only time the park is literally filled. We have records showing that there are plenty of lots there on the other weeks.

If it rains on the weekend, there's a lot of lots. People that are there for 21 days, we book our lots 11 months in advance. Yes, we do do that. We go home for five days and we come back.

Mrs. Moorehead, who is a 90-year-old woman, and her husband is even in one, they come from New Jersey, and at that time they come for their least three weeks. They do go home for five days and they come home for three more weeks. They are not there in May. They are not there during June. They come at the end of June.

I can't see taking this away from them. Their family has been camping at Hammonasset since

1902, and how many more years are they going to be at Hammonasset?

They're not taking camping away from people. There's a lot of camping.

In the seventies, there was a thousand lots at Hammonasset. Now there's 567 because they made a bird sanctuary up at Meigs Point. Open up Meigs Point. That will increase the revenue. It will bring business into Madison. People will be buying there, shopping there. You can't take this away from people like that.

And as an initial matter, I admit to you that the many, many fond memories and pleasant experience at Hammonasset are for my present -- for my presenting this testimony today. Our family has camped at Hammonasset for four generations. Great, great-grandparents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, daughters, sisters, friends have all enjoyed it.

In fact, one of our family members comes from Virginia now for his three weeks, and then he goes back.

I cannot justify the memories at Hammonasset, but I will try to recount here all the (inaudible) children have had. Learning how to ride a bike without training wheels. Nights at the campfire --

REP. ROY: Angela --

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: Fishing, crabbing --

REP. ROY: Angela --

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: -- excursions --

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cip/jr/gbr ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

11:00 A.M.

REP. ROY: There it is. You can't read the whole thing, unfortunately.

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: Right.

REP. ROY: Wrap up, and we'll ask you questions.

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: What I'm saying is --

REP. ROY: Hold on.

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: I'm for questions. Go.

REP. ROY: Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER: Ms. Miller, I -- Hammonasset is in my district, and I spent a lot --

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: I know, I --

SENATOR MEYER: A lot of time there with children and grandchildren, and, you know, right next to Hammonasset State Park was a private airport, and I got the park superintendent to say that he would love to have that for additional camping.

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: I know.

SENATOR MEYER: And unfortunately, the Department of Environmental Protection would not financially support that.

So -- but that is still going to a good purpose, you may know. I'm just having trouble understanding your testimony and also the testimony of the last witness, and it's important I understand it --

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: Okay.

SENATOR MEYER: -- because this bill does not

restrict to you 21 days. What this bill says -- and this is the real aim of this bill, is to give you more than 21 days as long as there's a than vacancy in the park, and you will be entitled to unlimited days if -- if there's a vacancy.

And from what you said in your testimony other than Memorial Day, it is -- it is vacant. So you're going to have plenty of vacancies and plenty of opportunities to stay there perhaps for the whole summer.

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: What the problem, I think is, to book a lot at Hammonasset, you have to book a 21 -- one within months to the day to get the three weeks, and I think that's where there's a little bit of mixup here, like the Mooreheads.

They book their lot 11 months to the day, and then they have that other week out, and then they book it 11 months to the day. This is what they've been told at Hammonasset you cannot do.

This is where I think there's a mixup in this bill with people. I know you talked about those 21 families, but I think they're the people that are doing it, and they don't feel there's anything wrong with doing -- booking (inaudible) 21 -- what you're saying is you have to book it when you get there. Don't do 11 months to the day. That's what the whole problem is with this bill.

SENATOR MEYER: The bill has no reference to -- to up with one months. I mean, that -- you're -- that's something --

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: So you're saying you can book 11 months to the day?

SENATOR MEYER: The bill has no reference to 11 months to the day at all, okay? We're talking about a new piece of legislation that would, you know, that this Committee introduced because we want you to have that extra time if the space is available.

And so what it says is during the period between Memorial Day and Labor Day, and that's the period that you're most interested in --

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: Right.

SENATOR MEYER: -- if there's a vacancy, you'll be able to have that. That lot will be available to you if there's a vacancy.

ANGELA MILLER: But if you call reserve America and you've already booked three weeks, they will tell you, I'm sorry, you've already been in for three weeks. You've already done your 21 days.

SENATOR MEYER: That's exactly what they would say, but this bill changes that. This -- this bill says that the Department release any vacant camping site on a first come, first served basis after you're exercised your 21 days.

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: Okay.

SENATOR MEYER: So it's very important you understand this. Because if there's something wrong in what this says, tell us. But -- but we're -- we're trying to get right at the very concern you have, and that is to -- to use more sites at Hammonasset that are vacant and allow to you camp there for virtually the entire summer.

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: Oh, okay.

SENATOR MEYER: Please -- please read this bill

carefully and -- and, you know, call me as a co-chair of this committee if you don't read it that way.

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: So it can be done, though, 11 months prior to going into the park?

SENATOR MEYER: There's nothing in the law that says about 11 months here.

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: Thank you very, very much. That's been the whole thing with Reserve America. They've told us we can't book if we've been 21 days.

So this new bill will change that.

SENATOR MEYER: That's why it's important for you to read it.

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Thank you, Representative Miner.

REP. MINER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I've been trying to follow this conversation now and the comments made by the other co-chair, and I don't see it as being that clear, Mr. Chairman, because it says that the commissioner may adopt regulations in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 54 to establish limits.

So I guess I would wonder the way it's drafted whether or not the commissioner through that regulatory process could actually in fact limit the time beyond what we anticipate. And the real reason I say that is because right in line 8, it says, "may lease campsites." May.

And I think if we wanted to be clear of what our intention is, it should say "shall lease campsites for three weeks," and that way, shall

lease for up to three weeks, there's no kind of ambiguity, because it seems to me that this leaves room for the adoption of regulations that could in fact be less than that.

I'm not questioning what you think our intent is here. I'm just not sure that at the end of the day they couldn't do something through the regulatory process which would kind of lead --

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: They --

REP. MINER: Camp America I guess to interpret it in some other way.

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: Right, because as soon as you call them, if you book three weeks, that's it, you can't (inaudible).

REP. MINER: And just for the record, when the commissioner was here, I was kind of surfing the 'net on this issue, and it is -- it's I think a worthwhile read if you look at what states adjacent to the State of Connecticut do.

In fact, a number of them have a two-week limit, 15 days, which is a little more than two weeks.

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: Right.

REP. MINER: And so I'm not sure that establishing limits is an uncommon thing in New England. I'm trying to remember when I was in Canada, but I think in Canada, if you're on it, you can have it for the summer, I believe, is way it used to be in Ontario.

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: (Inaudible) here, too.

REP. MINER: So it is not consistent from state to state or country to country. So it might be

worth a little bit of review. Thank you.

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: Thank you very much. You said what I wanted to do.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any other questions or comments? Thank you very much, Angela.

GINGER ANGELA MILLER: Thank you very much.

REP. ROY: Mr. Nero, and followed by Paula Pellerin. And your first name, sir?

LOUIS NERO: Louis, L-o-u-i-s.

REP. ROY: Louis, thank you.

LOUIS NERO: My name is Louis Nero. I live in Cheshire, Connecticut, and I've been camping at Hammonasset for only 25 years, because there's many people I know that have been camping most of their lives, go to 40, 50, 60 years.

I'd like to, if I may, there has been granted many more minutes than three minutes to other people. I'd like to answer the question that -- I'm sorry, first I'd like to acknowledge Chairman and Committee members, okay, I -- I want to thank you for the opportunity --

A VOICE: (Inaudible).

LOUIS NERO: Okay. I want to thank you for the opportunity for letting us speak here. If I could answer the question, I think it was Senator Meyer, to the 21 days, okay.

I have booked more than 21 days there, okay, so I had my limit of 21 days. And what happened, I called Reserve America for Columbus Day next year. And I was told that I could only book

two more days, because that's only -- two days I had left, okay? So they do stop you from camping and reserving, okay?

So what this bill does, basically it's putting lipstick on an old bill from 1971 that they dusted off. It has nothing to do with what the present policy has been followed for 40 years. You ask anybody that's been camping, they'll tell you it's 21 and five at Hammonasset. That means 21 days in, five days out, okay? That's been on their websites for ten years since been on the Reserve America, okay?

So I'd like for you, the Committee, to understand that's what people have been following for 40 years. I've been following it for 25 years, okay?

So the 21, out 45 has been the norm. This 1971 law was put into place, as it was explained to me, from when there was all summer camping there, which you have -- put into a lotto system, you got your spot and you were there for the whole summer.

Obviously some governor or official went through there and it looked like a shantytown, so they got ticked, and there's probably history, and you guys can look through the legislative notes, that there were 12 years of discussion before that law was put in place. So that's how far back this goes. So that's when it was determined that 21 applied.

I've talked to many people, because when I found out about this in June of last year, not through newspapers, not through the website, not through anything, okay, through one of the park managers, says, oh, next year I think they're going to limit you to 21 days.

The next time I found out about it was one of my friends went to Reserve for the second time, meaning she booked for, like, ten days for the Memorial weekend. They went to book for their June or July, I forgot exactly what it was, and they said that -- I'm not going to pay attention to that, please.

I basically was told that I only had ten days left. I said what's that all about? And that's how we found out, meaning the camping community, that they were looking into this and found out, dang, to dust off this law, that they were going to limit people to 21 days.

That's not a way to market that park, okay? That was very bad hundred. What I tried to do was I tried to speak to -- I talked to their commissioner, Mr. Esty. I talked to Mr. Tyler, who was the director, and I tried to talk with my representatives, Al Adinolfi, who set up a meeting.

I tried very nicely to explain to them you are basically pulling the rug out from the people. People are booking one year in advance. You're not giving them enough notice, okay? You have to change your whole concept of camping. Maybe I only want to do a weekend. Maybe I want to save it all for August. You didn't give people enough time.

I said please leave what you've been doing for 40 years for one more year. Police it, because you haven't policed it. That's been the whole problem. It hasn't been policed. People there, the management, let this go. So what people did, they took advantage of it. Twenty-three people, okay?

And, by the way, there's only another 100 people that camp there more than 21 days. Out

of the 200-something-thousand people who camp in the State of Connecticut, it's only 122 or 23 people that we're talking about here today. Not a big amount, okay?

And also, by the way, we provide out of 200,000 people, we provide \$125 million to the economy of that year. You can look that up. It's under the Connecticut Center FOR Economic Analysis study on 6/15/2011 by the University of Connecticut. You can look that up. It's probably 50, 60 pages.

So there was a Representative here who said that I'm glad you're not involved with finance. You are involved with finance. You can make some money at that park. You could create a lot of income for this state if it's done properly. You are half empty because you raised the rates, you doubled them all of a sudden in one of the sessions, not this committee but legislators, and what happened? The campground reservations dropped 40 percent. Whoops, we have to change that, and we dropped it from \$30, because it went from 15 to 30, it went down to \$20, you're still getting low reservations, okay?

So this has been the -- sort of the history. I would be glad to sit down with anybody and answer a lot of questions, because I did a lot of research on this. We have a petition that is probably 170, 80 people that have been signing. They want the 21 and five.

I'd just like to read what I --

REP. ROY: Okay. One moment. We're going to follow up with you. I've taken twice the amount of time that we normally --

LOUIS NERO: There's people here that talked for 20

minutes. I've been sitting there since 9:30. Why can't you listen to me for five minutes? That's all I'm asking. I didn't even read that. I tried to answer questions that you had before.

REP. ROY: Hold on. Representative Miner.

REP. MINER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think knowing these two gentlemen the way I do, I think they want to hear what everybody has to say, but the problem we get into is this protocol thing where if we're not careful how we do it, people get the wrong perception.

I'm frankly interested that you have the level of detail that you have on this matter, because it sounds as though you know more about this than I do, which may not surprise anyone, and I suspect that that may be the case with everyone else here.

So is that -- is the information that you're talking about readily available to us? do you have that in printed form somehow?

LOUIS NERO: I have submitted my letter, okay, but I --

REP. MINER: So in terms of statistics --

LOUIS NERO: My has submitted a letter which has statistics of --

REP. MINER: Wait a minute. You can't give your wife's testimony, too. I'm only kidding.

LOUIS NERO: If she was up here, she would be worse than me.

REP. MINER: But to Representative Roy's point, if you have some detail for us to look at, I think

we're all concerned. I mean, we listened early this morning to the Commissioner as we talked about trying to balance a budget and defray some of the costs for trying to commit youth to fishing.

LOUIS NERO: Right.

REP. MINER: And it sounds to me like there's a revenue potential here that inures to the same agency that if we actually look at this in a little more depth maybe as a committee, we're not the Appropriations Committee, we're not the Finance Committee, but we surely are the Environment Committee, and I think this is within the --

LOUIS NERO: That -- that is one of the reasons why I wanted to --

REP. MINER: Exactly.

LOUIS NERO: Work with the gentlemen. I apologize if I'm coming on strong, but I just --

REP. MINER: That's okay.

LOUIS NERO: It's 9:30, and I -- I'm not going to eat anymore corn. I know all about woodstoves and I'm not going to throw away my mattress or have it rebuilt. I appreciate your time and effort. I just got a little bit upset, because I think that you people do not understand, and I think if I --

If -- lipstick was put on that will policy, and it's not -- it wasn't well thought out.

REP. ROY: You're talking about someone who packs his wife, his then-two-teenage-daughters and his tent and went on a five-week, 9600 cross-country trip, so I'm a camper. I

understand. And what -- what you're about, and I want to make it as good as we can for you.

So I apologize if I hurt your feelings it stepping in as I did. I like the history you've given us. I think we can take that and work with the Department to get things better for you and for all campers there.

LOUIS NERO: Okay. Just one more statement, and I'll leave. I tried to do that, and I spent time with these people, and here's what I asked them to do. I said leave it alone for a year, talk -- to all the people, do a surveys. Just -- hundreds of other people that probably have different ideas than I have. I was just like one person. This didn't do that. That's what -- that's what upset me the most. They didn't even give it a shot.

And they threw it on your lap to try to get something changed. It's not even going to take place until next year anyway. It's -- it's fouling up all the people's reservations and vacations for this year.

In other words, everybody is in a tizzy, because they don't know what's going on. And this is why I was trying to tell them, try to avoid that, because you're going to get people that start going to Rhode Island, start going to permanent campgrounds because, as I said, I'm not spending 30,000 dollars on a -- on a rig and use it for only 21 days at Hammonasset. I have no water, I have still wood bathrooms. I love the park. I think the park is great. I (inaudible) get a job on the beach. It didn't hurt the park that much, because, you know, thank God there was a lot of flooded areas, but we were there the day after. It look like a different place, a lot of trees.

But I love the park. I want it to work. I wish that you people would just take some time and really research and talk to some people. That's all I'm asking. Thank you.

REP. ROY: Will do. I'll talk to my brother who goes for two weeks every year.

LOUIS NERO: Thank you very much.

REP. ROY: Thank you. And we'll also talk to DEP. Maybe they'll talk to us.

A VOICE: (Inaudible).

REP. ROY: We will. Paul Pellerin.

PAULA PELLERIN: Paula.

REP. ROY: Paula.

PAULA PELLERIN: (Inaudible).

REP. ROY: And Paula will be followed by Greg Sharp.

PAULA PELLERIN: Okay. It's my practice -- this was a stopwatch, and we'll do this without dramatic pause.

Representative Roy, Senator Meyer, members of the Environmental Committee, for the record, my name is Paula Pellerin, and I'm the coowner of Hammonasset RV and Camp Center located in the Town of Westbrook.

I am here to testify regarding SB 85, AN ACT CONCERNING CAMPGROUND RESERVATIONS AT CERTAIN STATE PARKS. Our business sells RV parts and accessories and camping equipment, and we provide RV service and storage.

As with many small businesses in our area, our

existence and success is attached to the seasonal flow of traffic in our respective communities, and the impact the 21-day limit enforcement will have may be devastating to what are already will fragile business existences.

Connecticut may be open for businesses but every time I look the sign above that door read exit only. We need your help today.

We provide hauling for several of our storage customers who religiously camp at Hammonasset year after year. By enforcing the 21-day limit, not only does the state risk losing these shoreline campers and their camping fees to a neighboring state, we and our area businesses will lose all of the associated revenues from those same campers.

How much hauling, service and product revenue will our business lose each year? And if our storage customers decide that it is no longer cost-effective to own and maintain a camper for only three weeks per year, how big of an impact will that have on our bottom line? This is a risk we cannot afford for you to take.

It's not the weekend campers who spend money in our communities. They come packed for two or three days, and then they leave. It's the two-to three-week repeat campers who need grocery, eat out four or five times a week, use laundry facilities, enjoy nightlife, and, for our business, they need RV supplies and repairs. And during the weekdays, it's the repeat campers who sustain us.

Language in SB 85 is, at best, insufficient to counteract the problems the 21-day law will impose for businesses. The longtime practice of 21 days in, five days out, has served these

parks for many years and can continue to do so if the state is willing to address the issues of those new long-term campers that had been allowed to crop up.

I don't believe that penalizing all for the actions of some is the best -- is in the best manner to address this issue. Instead of changing the practice, require Reserve America to come up with safeguards against fraudulent reservations and tell the park staff to stop turning a blind eye and to start enforcing the rules that have been in place for years.

But regardless of what you decide, my question to you is, how do you intend to enforce these changes? If you can't answer that and if cannot be applied uniformly, then this entire process has been an exercise in futility.

Lastly, I would just like to add that I've been a faithful camper at Hammonasset for the last 46 years, and I am one of the many who have honored the state limits. Thank you.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Representative Mushinsky.

REP. MUSHINSKY: Hi.

PAULA PELLERIN: Hi.

REP. MUSHINSKY: I'm also a camper at Hammonasset and I have a question. If there's a 21-day restriction, isn't possible that people could still cheat with that new shorter period on Reserve America?

PAULA PELLERIN: They've been cheating for years.

REP. MUSHINSKY: Yes, so I'm not sure how this 21-day fixes it if people can still make the reservations on Reserve America and get

their -- another person's family with a different name to then make another reservation for 21 days on the same site.

PAULA PELLERIN: Well, it seems to me that technology -- that there has to be some technology in Reserve America to help curb that. You can't put it all on them.

But the park know who is these people are. Year after year, it's the same people, they come in, they park in the same spot, some of them for up to 15, 16 weeks, the entire summer. They come in before Memorial Day when it's open camping, and they never leave. The park knows this.

The park also has regulations in place that say at the end of your -- we'll use 21 days. Some people camp for two weeks, some people camp for a week. But at the end of your reservation, you're supposed to vacate that site. Not just you. You're supposed to take all your stuff with you and leave. And you're supposed to be out for five days.

The problem is, somewhere along the line, to be honest, this was back to Roger Kinderman's administration there, people would come up to the park and say, well, you know, my son's coming in with his family. They're going to use our -- our camper, and, you know, it's just such a pain to be off by noon and then have to set it back up at 1:00. Can we -- can we just leave it there?

And they probably asked the first few times. Well, then you stop asking, and they stop looking. The park drives around, the staff drives around every day with their list, checking to see who's supposed to be vacating those sites. It is up to the staff to make

sure those sites get vacated.

Now, yes, theoretically, and probably in practice, they could have a reservation in the son's name, and the son could show up and be the one that checks in, but it won't be on that site.

Part of the problem is, on Beach Road, if you're familiar with Hammonasset, you know -- I don't happen to like Beach Road, but a lot of people do, and especially now since the state put power up there, that's an even bigger draw, and more people want to be there and can't get on those sites because there are people that just get on them and stay all summer.

There has to be a way other than -- I mean, from our business standpoint, for what we do, we're a small business, we just opened in '08, and we came in in a bad economy. We were committed because we bought the building and we had serious money in renovations. It's been a tough four years, but we're alive and we're kept alive because a lot of these people are repeat customers, and we store their campers, like Mr. Nero's, and we haul him in. He's one of those people that goes in for two weeks, comes out. He's out for a couple of weeks, then he goes back in. He's honored that in-and-out schedule that the park, the state, somebody put in place many years ago and said this is how we're going to do it. And all of a sudden, the rug is being pulled out from under us.

I camp there. I don't know that it's going to impact me as much, because with our business, we don't have as much time to be in the campground, but I do go in in the July-August timeframe for three weeks every year.

REP. ROY: Okay. You want to address the --

PAULA PELLERIN: I'm sorry.

REP. ROY: The legislation.

PAULA PELLERIN: The legislation, yes.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

PAULA PELLERIN: I don't know best how to police that. But it seems to me that forcing people to just three weeks during Memorial Day weekend and Labor Day weekend, you're going to -- there's -- there's a lot of loss that's going to happen there. There's going to be loss to us as a business.

You talked about you're not trying to do that, that if there's sites open, that people can go. I sat and I listened. The problem is, I make my reservations 11 months in advance, and Reserve America tells me I can have 21 days. Okay. Let's say I wanted another two weeks on top of that. Reserve America is not going to allow me to make those reservations in advance.

So even if I wanted to stay on that site, probability is I won't get it. But what you're saying, basically, or the way it would be enforced is during that last day or so that I'm there, I can go to the office and ask them if there's any sites open.

So let's say I'm one of those people that -- that plans my reservations in advance, my vacations. Do I tell my employer a year ahead of time that I want that extra two weeks on the hopes that there's going to be a site open for me? Or do I just wait and call him the day before I'm supposed to be back in work and say, hey, you know, what they've got an extra two

weeks, I think I'm going to going to stay.

What you're proposing, it's great. For walk-ins, it's great. Reserve America, when you call them, won't tell you there's sites available. And if you go to the park staff, they're going to tell you to call Reserve America.

If you've ever called the park and said do you have anything open, they tell you you have to call Reserve America or go online and look. And Reserve America -- because the park and Reserve America do not talk to each other throughout the summer, people don't show up for their reservations.

The park, by policy, is supposed to cancel that reservation after 24 hours, but they don't. I think the state's just looking, saying, well, we're already getting our 20 bucks a night. We don't care. But you could rerent that site if the park staff told Reserve America there's an open site here. We've canceled it. It's open. Reserve America could then try and rerent it.

REP. ROY: Okay. We're going to address that issue with the -- with the Department.

PAULA PELLERIN: Okay.

REP. ROY: Thanks. From members of Committee?

SENATOR MEYER: I have one comment.

REP. ROY: Senator.

SENATOR MEYER: (Inaudible).

PAULA PELLERIN: This was two years ago, yes, yes.

SENATOR MEYER: (Inaudible).

PAULA PELLERIN: I'm not -- I'm not knocking 20 bucks. I think it's great. I think it's still well worth it.

I think for as long -- for as many years as it was \$15, it could have gone up a dollar here or a dollar there, but when you doubled or whoever doubled, that was -- that was shock for everybody. It is an oh, my God, all at once I'm paying twice as much for something that for years I've paid X for.

Incrementals are great, because they're easier to swallow. I think we can all agree on that up. But thank you for rolling it back, because that means I can afford to camp there.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any other questions or comments? Seeing none, thank you very much.

PAULA PELLERIN: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Greg Sharp, and he will be followed by Louis Burch.

GREP SHARP: You, Representative Roy, Senator Meyer, members of the Environment Committee.

I'm here today representing the environmental law section of the Connecticut Bar Association. I have written and provided testimony on both Raised Bill Number 86 and Raised Bill 87. I'll address them both briefly, as well as the comments that I saw this morning from the Commissioner on both bills.

The two bills are -- are identical in purpose in that they both would provide an applicant for two different DEP permits, the right to a hearing and the right then to appeal the final decision to Superior Court.

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**ENVIRONMENT
PART 2
349 – 698**

2012

Representative Richard Roy, Senator Ed Meyer, Members of the Environment Committee, for the record my name is Jeff Barske from the Town of Thompson and also the Thompson Town Clerk by profession, and I am here to testify with respect to SB 85N ACT CONCERNING CAMPGROUND RESERVATIONS AT CERTAIN STATE PARKS.

I have camped at Hammonasset for 57 of my 59 years and consider myself well acquainted with camping law history and DEEP State Park management and interpretation of those laws.

SB 85 seeks to limit a camping family to 21 total camping nights between Memorial Day and Labor Day. This would be a serious restriction to Ct and out of state camping families compared to the DEEP practices of the last 40 years.

When legislation was enacted in the early 70's to open up camp sites to more families it made a lot of sense.

The way that legislation has been interpreted my Shoreline DEEP campground management for the 40 years since 1973, has been to allow campers a maximum stay of 21 nights followed by 5 days away from the park before another camping reservation would be accepted. This system has worked for 40 years. For much of June, the latter part of August and then from Labor Day to the end of the season in early October, campsites are readily available. On July 28th of last year, the Facebook site for Hammonasset heralded "we have 91 campsites available; Come on Down"..

This legislation to limit how many nights a camping family can stay all season to 21 days is a result of complaints that campsites are not available at these parks in core summer periods.

What is important to note is that campsites can be reserved 11 months ahead of time. A family that plans their vacations ahead of time, as most of us do, for holiday trips, family airline trips and any other vacation time away from home, has plenty of time to reserve campsites at these shoreline parks if they plan ahead. The campsites available to reserve around July 4th and the two other long holiday weekends are certainly a limited commodity and I believe the practice of "first come first served" is fair. To legislate camping to only 21 days during the summer is overkill for everyone; especially since anyone visiting the parks in June, late August and September can see for themselves that there are plenty of open sites. Why turn away able and willing campers, willing to reserve sites and pay for them months ahead of time?

All parties agree that CGS 23-16A needs to be amended, as it can be interpreted in several ways; a reasonable way as it has been for 40 years with the 21 day max, 5 day out rule, or conversely, a very restrictive way, as DEEP has recently announced, it wants to limit camping families to 21 days ALL YEAR !

My suggestions are, in order of preference, to amend shoreline camping laws with the following language.

1. Most preferable is to continue to apply the practice of a "21 day maximum one time stay followed by a 5 day period out of the park." On site Camp Management can police those families who abuse the 21 day rule by booking campsites under other family names or making overlapping reservations.

or

2. Amend the current SB 85 proposed language to allow 28 days of camping rather than 21 days between July 1st and Labor Day.

or

3. Maintain the current 21 day maximum stay, 5 day out rule and set aside 10% of campground sites to only be reserved 14 days ahead of the stay; (this would allow families whose plans have changed or have made a quick decision to camp, and have sites available to reserve at the last minute.)

If the DEEP's highly restrictive plans to limit camping families to 21 camping nights all year, or the current suggestion, SB 85, to limit reservations to 21 days from Memorial Day to Labor Day are adopted, many more campsites will remain unused resulting in lower revenue to the state, lost revenue to shoreline businesses, and restrictive access to our two beautiful State Parks which may will push away the State's loyal campers, many of them retired senior citizens

It is my hope that my testimony along with others testifying today will result in fair and equitable legislation and allow the state to maximize park use and keep our shorelines parks open to all who desire to enjoy the beauty and relaxation of these two wonderful treasures.

To arbitrarily restrict access to these parks to families from Ct and from out of state, willing to pay and reserve campsites months ahead of time, many of them Senior Citizens, when for much of the camping season, sites are readily available, is not what our State Parks are all about. Please keep our Parks open without severe restrictions, for everyone to enjoy .

Jeffrey Barske
Thompson CT.

Representative Roy, Senator Meyer, Members of the Environment Committee, for the record my name is Angela Miller. I, and my extended family and many friends, are long standing and dedicated campers at Hammonasset State Park. I am here to voice objection to the proposed 21 day statute that you seek to impose to the detriment of long-term campers such as my family and friends, as well as to the detriment of State and local area revenues and jobs. My reference to "long-term" campers is intended to mean people who camp at Connecticut State Parks more than 21 days between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

As an initial matter, I admit to you that the many, many fond past and present experiences at Hammonasset are the impetus for my presenting this testimony today. Our family has camped at Hammonasset for 4 generations and great-grandparents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, sons, daughters and friends have all enjoyed and continue to enjoy Hammonasset State Park. In fact, one of our family members still comes to Hammonasset to camp each summer all the way from Virginia so that his children can enjoy the experience of time spent camping with his parents, brothers, sister, aunts, cousins, and nieces and nephews. As I could never do justice to the many memories of our time at Hammonasset, I will not try to recount here all the first steps taken at the campsite by children, first times on a bike without training wheels, nights by the campfire, fishing and crabbing excursions, swimming after a storm in what we call the "big waves", bingo and movies at the old pavilion, volley ball at Dowds, climbing the rock jetty at Meigs, and the many, many other memories and events that are part of the experience of long-term camping at Hammonasset. Instead, I will simply note that, as a personal matter, the proposed 21 day statute threatens to destroy the creation of new memories for my family as well as the many other long-term Hammonasset campers. Now, I will provide you the additional reasons why the proposed 21 day statute should not be approved.

First, the proposed 21 day statute requires that long-term campers accept the cost of maintaining their trailer, and the towing and attendant costs for a full year, but will limit the benefit of such expense to 21 days. I know that a number of long-term campers, particularly those from out of State, will no longer consider such expense to be worth 21 days of use. Regardless, at the very least, the proposed regulation will reduce the income derived by the State from such long-term campers to a 21 day period. I would have assumed that the State would prefer to be passing a new statute that would cause an increase in State revenue, rather than the proposed 21 day statute that will increase the number of vacant camping lots and cause a reduction of both State revenue and the revenue for local area stores, service providers and restaurants.

Second, long-term campers consistently lease campsites regardless of weather, bugs or other external factors. Weekend only campers will provide an under-utilization of State Park resources, as well as a less consistent revenue stream. As such, the proposed 21 day statute will reduce both State revenue and the revenue for local area stores, service providers and restaurants.

Third, Hammonasset is not consistently sold out during the week. Long-term campers, however, pay to lease camp sites on the weekday dates, as well as the weekend dates. The reduction of long-term campers will increase the number of camping sites vacant during the week. Again, the proposed rule will reduce State revenue and revenue for local area stores, service providers and restaurants.

Fourth, with reduced revenue, and multiple campsites remaining unleased, Hammonasset presumably will be

required to reduce its full and/or part time summer staff, which again is not a benefit to the State or the local area stores, service providers and restaurants

Fifth, the enforcement of the proposed 21 day statute possibly discriminates against families. The draft language notes that you plan to enforce the proposed 21 day statute against families. I question however why there has been a decision to focus solely against the use of State Parks by families. My brief research indicates that church, youth, charity, and Special Olympics events take advantage of the natural resources available at Connecticut State parks. I presume that all supporters of such groups and/or the related compelling events will be subject to the 21 day camping restrictions that you now seek to impose per the proposed 21 day statute. Or, will the enforcement of the proposed 21 day statute not apply to such groups/events and therefore be unfairly applied solely to families? If so, why would this Committee decide to single out the family unit for enforcement?

Sixth, Commissioner Esty has noted that the new combined Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is "committed to motivating Connecticut's residents - especially children - to learn and care about the environment." How is such a stated commitment consistent with the proposed 21 day statute that will reduce the number of campsites leased at Hammonasset and thereby reduce the amount of time that children spend at one of the best places to learn and appreciate Connecticut's environment -- Hammonasset

Finally, I will end with the simple statement that I fail to see any positive reason why the proposed 21 day statute should be passed. Nor do I understand what group of Connecticut citizens seek to benefit from the proposed regulation as there is no apparent benefit that will result, yet the harm to long-term campers and the damage to State and local area revenues, jobs, and families is apparent.

Thank you

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To: Environmental
Committee
From: Louis Nero
Re: Sb #85

There has been a policy followed for 40 years which allowed a camper to stay a maximum of 21 days and then had to leave the park for 5 days. There was no limit for the season. This policy has not been strictly enforced by park officials. Last year park officials dusted off a statute from 1971. This has caused much confusion for all campers. I tried to have meetings with senior park officials and explain the problems this would create because it was such a drastic change to the rule that was currently followed. The huge difference was that the old (1971) statute was interpreted to read that it would limit a family to 21 days in a year.

I feel that there was a precedent set for over the last 25 years since I have camped at Hammonasset .

I totally disagree with this new bill. All other state parks have no seasonal limit, why should the largest parks that are not always full have a limit?

Please Listen to all the speakers and do some investigations before you make a decision.

Thank you.

Louis Nero

February 20, 2012

TO: State of CT Environmental Committee

FROM: Marion Nero
55 Jesse Court
Cheshire, CT 06410
(203) 272-9193

RE: SB No. 85 (Raised) an Act Concerning Reservations at Certain State Parks

It has come to my attention that the State of CT DEEP is proposing to enact a law (SB No. 85) that states campers would be allowed to camp at Hammonasset Beach State Park for 21 consecutive days from Memorial Day through Labor Day (for the entire year). There has been a general rule in place for the past 40 years which allowed campers to camp for a maximum of 21 days and then leave for 5, after that time they could return. My husband and I have followed this rule and have enjoyed camping at Hammonasset Beach for the past 25 years. There have been some that have abused this rule but this is because people became lax and the rule wasn't being enforced (from what I understand a total of 23 campers).

I am attaching a document that shows camping sites for next year are readily available except for the holidays. We are seniors and enjoy camping with friends and family. We also find that at this point in our lives we have more time to enjoy camping. This would be a hardship on us especially when there are so many sites available throughout the camping season. I could see the basis of this law if the park was full 100% of the time, but as I have shown this is not the case. It seems unfair that the shoreline parks would be the only parks with this new rule. It should also be taken in consideration that the state and local businesses in the area will lose income if this rule is put in force.

Is the DEEP honestly going to tell someone they cannot camp because they have reached their quota for the year when there are 200 to over 400 sites available?

I feel this is the result of a few people, who for whatever reason, cannot understand that even though it is camping and a state park, reservations must be made in advance for a popular time of year. They find out the weather is going to be good and decide to call on

July 1st to camp for July 4th and then get angry and complain because nothing is available. As the famous quote says "you can't please all of the people all of the time", this group will still complain even if this rule is put in place.

Thank you for your consideration.

Marion Nero

Camping Sites Available For 2012 At Hammonasset Beach State Park

As of February 18, 2011 the following are the number of sites available for the 2012 camping season: Total Number of Camping Sites at Hammonasset - 543

Weekend:	May 25 – May 27 (Memorial Day):	0
Midweek:	May 28 – May 31	344
Weekend:	June 1 – June 3	407
Midweek:	June 4 – June 7	465
Weekend:	June 8 – June 10	417
Midweek:	June 11 – June 14	439
Weekend:	June 15 – June 17	358
Midweek:	June 18 – June 21	385
Weekend:	June 22 – June 24	225
Midweek:	June 25 – June 28	246
Weekend:	June 29 – July 1 (Weekend before 4 th of July)	88
Midweek:	July 2 – July 5 (Week of 4 th of July)	30
Weekend:	July 6 – July 8 (Weekend after 4 th of July)	16
Midweek:	July 9 – July 12	201
Weekend:	July 13 – July 15	126
Midweek:	July 16 – July 19	238
Weekend:	July 20 – July 22	135

Midweek:	July 23 – July 26	229
Weekend:	July 27 – July 29	175
Midweek:	July 30 – August 2	298
Weekend:	August 3 – August 5	189
Midweek:	August 6 – August 9	226
Weekend:	August 10 – August 12	191
Midweek:	August 13 – August 16	323
Weekend:	August 17 – August 19	282
Midweek:	August 20 – August 23	360
Weekend:	August 24 – August 26	327
Midweek:	August 27 – August 30	391
Weekend:	August 31 – September 3 (Labor Day Weekend)	133

Representative Roy, Senator Meyer, Members of the Environment Committee, for the record my name is Paula Pellerin and I am the co-owner of Hammonasset RV & Camp Center located in the town of Westbrook. I am here to testify regarding SB 85, AN ACT CONCERNING CAMPGROUND RESERVATIONS AT CERTAIN STATE PARKS.

Our business sells RV parts & accessories and camping equipment, and we provide RV service and storage. As with many small businesses on our area, our existence and success is attached to the seasonal flow of traffic in our respective communities and the impact the 21 day limit enforcement will have may be devastating to what are already fragile business existences. Connecticut may open for business but every time I look, the sign above that door reads "EXIT ONLY". We need your help today.

We provide hauling for several of our storage customers who religiously camp at Hammonasset year after year. By enforcing the 21 day limit, not only does the State risk losing these shoreline campers and their camping fees to a neighboring state, we and other area businesses will lose all of the associated revenues from those same campers. How much hauling, service, and product revenue will our business lose each year? And if our storage customers decide that it is no longer cost effective to own and maintain a camper for only 3 weeks per year, how big of an impact will that have on our bottom line? This is a risk we can't afford for you to take.

It's not the weekend campers who are out spending money in our communities. They come packed for 2 or 3 days and then they leave. It's the 2 to 3 week, repeat campers who need groceries, eat out 4 or 5 times a week, use the laundry facilities, enjoy some night life, and for our business, need RV supplies and repairs. During the weekdays, it's the repeat campers who sustain us.

The language in SB 85 is at best, insufficient to counteract the problems the 21 day law will impose. The long-time practice of 21 days in, 5 days out has served these parks well for many years and can continue to do so, if the state is willing to address the issues of those "new long-term campers" that have been allowed to crop up. I don't believe that penalizing all for the actions of some is the best manner in which to address this issue. Instead of changing the practice, require Reserve America to come up with safeguards against fraudulent reservations and tell the park staff to stop turning a blind eye and start enforcing the rules that have been in place for years

But regardless of what you decide, my question to you is how you intend to enforce these changes? If you can't answer that and if it can't be applied uniformly, then this entire process has been an exercise in futility.

Lastly, I would like to add that I have been a faithful camper at Hammonasset for the last 46 years and I am one of the many who have honored the stay limits.

Thank you.

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2012

TESTIMONY ON SB 85 AN ACT CONCERNING CAMPGROUND
RESERVATIONS AT CERTAIN STATE PARKS.

I am a senior citizen that has lived in CT all my life. I have enjoyed the Ct shoreline since I was a child. Now that I am 74 years old and have the time to enjoy the Conn. State Parks with my husband you are limiting the time I can spend down there. My question is how much time on this earth do I have left? Please don't limit my time camping because I want to enjoy the time I have left camping.

Thank You,

Lucy Stanisz
17 Jade Cir
Southington, CT 06489

I am a senior citizen that has lived in CT all my life. I have enjoyed the Ct shoreline since I was a child. Now that I am 79 years old and have the time to enjoy the Conn. State Parks with my wife you are limiting the time I can spend down there. My question is how much time on this earth do I have left? Please don't limit my time camping because I want to enjoy the time I have left camping.

Thank You,

Edward Stanisz
17 Jade Cir
Southington, CT 06489



State of Connecticut

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL**

REPRESENTATIVE AL ADINOLFI
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRD ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 4200
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591

TOLL FREE (800) 842-1423
CAPITOL (860) 240-8700
HOME (203) 272-9701
EMAIL AlAdinolfi@housegop.ct.gov

RANKING MEMBER
SELECT COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

MEMBER
HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

*Testimony by Representative Al Adinolfi
Before the Environment Committee
On Senate Bill 85
February 22, 2012*

Good morning Chairmen Meyer and Roy, Ranking Members Roraback and Chapin, and members of the Environment Committee. I am Representative Al Adinolfi and I would like to thank this committee for letting me present my testimony in support of Senate Bill 85, AN ACT CONCERNING CAMPGROUND RESERVATIONS AT CERTAIN STATE PARKS.

The goal of this bill is to clarify the twenty one days in and five days out rule for camping at shore parks. I would like to speak shortly about my original request for this legislation. The state loses a bundle of money for not adhering to the program that was in place for over 20 years. The program that has existed for so many years worked well and was fair to every camper. A few families, less than 25, took advantage of the rule by using different names and identification. This forced the implementation of an old law on the books that limited campers to only three weeks even if there was space available. Why penalize thousands of campers for the few violators of the rules implemented by the camp director. I strongly recommend that we continue to adhere to the rule that has been in place for many years, twenty one days in and five days out.

Once again I would like to say thank you to the committee members for allowing me to testify on Senate Bill 85. I will make myself available to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Rep. Al Adinolfi

Dear Mary and Kevin,
I thought that you might be interested in
reading this.

Constance

Constance R. Muirhead
1629 Nottingham Way
Mountainside, New Jersey 07092
908-232-3170
robncon@verizon.net

January 12, 2012

Representative Daniel Rovero
Legislative Office Building – Room 4004
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Re: The Connecticut Shoreline Campground 21 day Stay Law
CT Gen. Statute, Chapter 447, Sec. 23-16a

Dear Representative Rovero:

I am writing to you as an 89 year old member of a fifth generation family of camping enthusiasts – most of whom have camped at Hammonasset for many, many years. Enclosed is a photo, which was taken in 1902 – 110 years ago -- showing my mother and my grandmother sitting in front of my grandmother's camping outfit.

I have camped at Hammonasset every year since early childhood, except when the Park was closed during World War II. – always complying with the rules in effect during those times – and looking forward each summer to reunions with life-long camping friends and families. Over the years my entire family have thought of Hammonasset as their first-love for a vacation. For many of them camping at Hammonasset comprised their only vacations.

When the General Assembly meets in February, I am urging you to propose/support a Bill which would rescind or change the present 21 days per year rule.

My reasons are as follows:

1. Long-term campers (3 weeks in, 5 days out) are the very people who support the economy BIG TIME in and around the Park. We spend substantial sums each year eating in local restaurants, shopping in the local stores and visiting the local tourists attractions repeatedly. If we were limited to 21 days, the local economy would suffer, and the State would lose sales tax revenues;
2. The argument that long-term campers monopolize the campsites is not true. Only on week-ends (especially in July) are most of the campsites rented. There are many camp-sites available from Mon.-Fri. For many years I have been happily paying more than \$600 (higher fees for out-of-state-campers) for 3-week stays including the Mondays through Fridays when most of the sites would likely have been unoccupied otherwise. With enforcement of the present 21 day law, the State would lose the revenue from many mid-week campsite occupancies;

3. Unfortunately, a few disgruntled people have caused this up-roar, based on false figures of monopolized camp-sites. Everyone has an equal opportunity to apply for a camp-site at Hammonasset, and that application can be submitted and paid for 11 months prior to occupancy;
4. If the 21 Day maximum stay law remains in effect, the happy reunions mentioned above with fellow campers would be lost. There is no chance we could all be together during the same 21 day period.

Possible Solutions:

1. Revise the present law to permit 28 day stays per season (June through August), either consecutively or cumulatively;
2. Or propose that the law revert to the previous practice of 3 weeks in and 5 days out.

Currently, when the State is trying to promote tourism in an effort to increase revenue, the current 21 Day stay rule does just the opposite. It prohibits campers from paying for campsites which otherwise would likely be vacant on Mondays through Fridays.

Please exert your best efforts to rescind the present controversial, ill-advised total 21 day stay rule, and to change it as suggested above.

You have a golden opportunity in the palms of your hands to help solve this problem. Please don't let it slip through your fingers.

Sincerely,

Constance R. Muirhead

**TESTIMONY ON SB 85 AN ACT CONCERNING CAMPGROUND
RESERVATIONS AT CERTAIN STATE PARKS.**

We support the old rule of 21 days in and 5 days out at Conn. State parks. We do not wish for this to be changed.

Thank You,
James L. Comerford III
PO Box 730
1 Alpine Circle
Sandy Hook, CT 06482

Hopefully you can pass my comments along. I am unable to attend the General Assembly Meeting. Thank you.

I am a third generation camper at Hammonasset State Park and I've been camping at Hammonasset State Park for the past 55 years. I find it unconscionable that the State of Connecticut would turn away revenue from people who are willing to pay 11 months in advance to camp at our only 2 state parks on the ocean, and who would prefer to camp more than 21 days per season. As a Connecticut taxpayer I should have the option to camp at our state parks when I want and it should not be mandated that I'm only allowed 21 days per season. During the camping season at Hammonasset State Park, I and fellow campers frequent restaurants, grocery stores, gas stations, hardware stores, retail outlets, RV camping centers, libraries, churches, and laundry facilities, etc. Our purchases help local businesses prosper and add revenue to the tax base.

I have repeatedly observed over the summer months many vacant camp sites, which are not utilized therefore a loss in revenue. Its the repeat 21day campers who support the park rain or shine. It is therefore guaranteed revenue for the State of Connecticut. It would be a shame to turn Connecticut residents away because of the 21 day rule and force families to camp at our neighboring states, losing the camping dollars and supporting their state economy not to mention the park employees that are effected by the lose of campers. Our state has very little public beach access compared to the private beaches and we should be able to enjoy them when time allows.

Thank you,
Laurie Biddle

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2012

TESTIMONY ON SB 85 AN ACT CONCERNING CAMPGROUND
RESERVATIONS AT CERTAIN STATE PARKS.

I am a senior citizen that has lived in CT all my life. I have enjoyed the Ct shoreline since I was a child. Now that I am 74 years old and have the time to enjoy the Conn. State Parks with my husband you are limiting the time I can spend down there. My question is how much time on this earth do I have left? Please don't limit my time camping because I want to enjoy the time I have left camping.

Thank You,

Lucy Stanisz
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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2012

TESTIMONY ON SB 85 AN ACT CONCERNING CAMPGROUND
RESERVATIONS AT CERTAIN STATE PARKS.

I am writing to let you know my opinion on the law regarding camping at the state parks. I have camped at Hammonasset State Park with my family since I was in jr. high school, now I bring my family camping there. I don't understand how they could start following the rules now, after all these years of ignoring them. That's not fair! We are strapped for money these days and that is one place we can vacation that's affordable. The people who stay there all summer and use the 21 days in and 5 days out keep the shoreline business up and running. How can you possibly even think of changing things after all these years! I want to keep the 21 days in, 5 days out policy!!

Kim Clavette
71 Barberry Drive
Burlington, Ct 06013



Connecticut Department of
**ENERGY &
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Public Hearing - February 22, 2012
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Daniel Esty
Presented By Deputy Commissioner Susan Frechette

Raised Senate Bill 85 - An Act Concerning Campground Reservations at Certain State Parks

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Raised Senate Bill 85 - An Act Concerning Campground Reservations at Certain State Parks. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) welcomes the opportunity to offer the following testimony.

We appreciate the Committee's willingness to raise this bill at the request of DEEP. This proposal, which we strongly support, would make reasonable changes to the statute that controls the number of days that a camping party may reserve sites at Hammonasset Beach and Rocky Neck State Parks.

This proposal would change the application of the "21 limit" on camping stays at the state's two shoreline state parks from a seasonal limit, to a limit that applies just during the period from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Additionally, the bill would allow DEEP to rent a camping space to anyone (regardless of the 21 limit) on a "walk-in" basis whenever there are vacancies throughout the camping season. The proposal also allows for subsequent adjustments to this limitation to be promulgated as agency regulations, as opposed to requiring additional legislative action. This change will provide an accommodation to those campers who wish to camp in the spring and fall, while continuing to maintain a reasonable limit on camping stays during the prime camping season, in order to allow the maximum number of campers to enjoy these parks.

As background, legislation was passed in 1969 to limit camping stays to 21 days in the aggregate at these two State Parks. This was done after many years of legislative discussion to end the prior practice of camping parties staying at those parks for the entire season. During that era, the camping season only ran from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Since that time, the camping season at these two parks has lengthened into the spring and fall. This proposal recognizes that fact by continuing the 21 limitation during the prime camping season, but allowing additional stays during the "shoulder seasons".

Over the years, DEEP's on-line camping reservation system has not accurately implemented this limitation, allowing campers to make reservations for multiple periods of up to 21 days, as long as there is a break of at least 5 days in between reservations. Once we became aware of the inconsistency between the law and our reservation system practice, we discontinued accepting reservations that exceed 21 days. Some members of the camping public rightly point out that campsite vacancies in the spring and fall season would occur if parties were limited to 21 days throughout the year. To address that concern, this proposal would limit the applicability of the 21 day maximum to just the prime camping season, and allow people to make additional reservations for the spring and fall, and when the parks are not at capacity, and would also allow a camping party to stay on a "walk-in" basis whenever there are vacancies throughout the camping season

We believe that this proposal achieves a balance between the competing goals of allowing folks to have a lengthy camping vacation at these parks, and the goal of allowing the greatest number of families to enjoy that same benefit. We also believe that increased revenue to the General Fund would result from additional camping stays that would be permitted with this change in law.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact DEEP's legislative liaison, Robert LaFrance at 424-3401 or Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov

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DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Those opposed, nay.

The ayes have it.

The amendment is adopted.

Will you remark further on the bill as amended?

Representative Albis, you have the floor.

REP. ALBIS (99th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move that this resolution be placed on the consent calendar.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

The motion before us is to place the item on the consent calendar.

Is there objection? Is there objection?

Hearing none, this item is placed on the consent calendar.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 531?

THE CLERK:

On page 35, Calendar 531, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 85, AN ACT CONCERNING CAMPGROUND RESERVATIONS THAT CERTAIN STATE PARKS, favorable report by the Committee on Finance.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Representative Roy of the 119th, you have the

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floor, sir.

REP. ROY (119th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move acceptance of the joint committees' favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

The question is on acceptance of the joint committees' favorable report and passage of the bill in concurrence with the Senate.

Will you remark, sir?

REP. ROY (119th):

Thank you. Mr. Clerk -- Mr. Speaker, this is a change in the rules at the campgrounds for seasonal camping.

I move acceptance in concurrence with the Senate.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Sir, do you have an amendment?

REP. ROY (119th):

Mr. Clerk -- Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has in his possession an amendment, LCO 4826. I asked that it be called, and I be allowed to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Will the Clerk please call LCO Number 4826, which will be designated as Senate Amendment Schedule "A."

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THE CLERK:

LCO 4826, Senate "A" offered by Senator Meyer.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize the amendment.

Is there objection? Is there objection?

Hearing none, Representative Roy.

REP. ROY (119th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move adoption. The amendment will provide for seasonal camping for and -- one camping unit.

And I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

The question before the Chamber is on adoption of Senate Amendment Schedule "A."

Will you remark? Will you remark?

If not, let me try your minds.

All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Those opposed, nay.

The ayes have it.

The amendment is adopted.

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Will you remark further on the bill as amended?

Representative Roy.

REP. ROY (119th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move this item be placed on the consent
calendar.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

The motion before us is the item on the consent
calendar.

Is there objection? Is there objection?

Hearing none, this item is placed on the consent
calendar.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 223?

THE CLERK:

On page 38, Calendar 223, Substitute for House
Bill Number 5304, AN ACT CONCERNING CHARITABLE
CONTRIBUTIONS PAID IN LIEU OF FINES FOR HUNTING AND
FISHING VIOLATIONS, favorable report by the Committee
on Finance.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Representative Kiner of the 59th, you have the
floor, sir.

REP. KINER (59th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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On page 7, Calendar 219, House Bill Number 5148,
AN ACT CONCERNING AN ACT CONCERNING COMMUNICATIONS TO
VICTIMS OF THE CURRENT OPERATION OF A MOTOR VEHICLE
THAT RESULTS IN DEATH OR SERIOUS PHYSICAL INJURY.
DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

The distinguished Majority Leader, Representative
Sharkey.

REP. SHARKEY (88th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Good to see you up there.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you, sir.

REP. SHARKEY (88th):

Mr. Speaker, this represents the consent calendar
and for everyone's edification, I will be listing off
the calendar numbers in numerical order so that
everyone can follow. I'll try keep it -- and make
sure that I do it in numerical order. Thank you.

These will be: Calendar Number 90, Number 155,
Number 219, Number 223, Number 290, Number 320, Number
338, Number 345, Number 389, Number 430, Number 444,
Number 455, Number 467, Number 470, Number 475, Number
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Number 496, Number 497, Number 505, Number 510, Number 513, Number 525, and Number 531.

I move adoption, I move adoption.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I move adoption of the consent calendar. I move the consent calendar.

(Speaker Donovan in the Chair.)

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The question before us is on passage of the bills on today's consent calendar.

Will you remark?

If not, staff and guests please come to the well the House. Members take their seats. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call. Members to the chamber. The House is voting today's consent calendar by roll call. Members to the chamber please.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Have all members voted? Have all members voted?

Please check the roll call board to make sure your vote has been properly cast.

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If all members have voted, the machine will be locked, and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

On today's consent calendar

Total number voting	144
Necessary for passage	73
Those voting Yea	144
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	7

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The consent calendar passes.

Any announcements or introductions? Any announcements or introductions?

Is there any business on the Clerk's desk?

THE CLERK:

A list of Senate bills, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Brendan Sharkey.

REP. SHARKEY (88th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move that we waive -- waive the reading of the bills and have these items placed immediately on the House calendar.

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Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Page 15, Calendar 291, Substitute for Senate Bill
Number 85, AN ACT CONCERNING CAMPGROUND RESERVATIONS
AT CERTAIN STATE PARKS, favorable report of the
committee on Environment.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Thanks, Madam President.

I move acceptance of the committees' joint and
favorable report and move passage of the bill, and I
request permission to summarize briefly.

THE CHAIR:

It's on acceptance and passage and briefly summarized
--

SENATOR MEYER:

Yes.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR MEYER:

Colleagues, this bill comes to us at the request of a
number of our constituents. It relates to two state
parks on the shoreline, Rocky Neck and Hammonasset.
Hammonasset is actually in my district. The problem
arose that while they were vacancies at these parks
for camping overnight, the Department, in some
instances, were not allowing people to stay more than
three weeks.

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What this bill provides is two things: first of all, our constituents will be able to stay at these parks for more than three weeks if they -- if they stay three weeks and then leave for five days, they can come back an additional three weeks. That's the first part of the bill.

The second part of the bill is sets up a pilot program by which our constituents will be able to -- to stay at these parks in the camping facilities of these parks without any particular termination. There'll be no termination date. It'll be a pilot program. It'll run this year and -- and those constituents who decide to do that will pay a larger fee. They'll pay a double fee. Right -- right now, the fee for -- for three weeks is \$420, so there would be a \$840 fee if you stay for -- for example, for the entire summer. Some of our constituents like to do.

So that, in essence, is what we're -- we're doing here. We think that we're providing more enjoyment at our state parks camps, particularly, where there are vacancies. And I know that in Rocky Neck and Hammonasset, they're often not vacancies if the weather's good. That's the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark?

Senator Roraback.

SENATOR RORABACK:

Thank you, Madam President.

And through you, to Senator Meyer.

I was wondering if he was familiar with whether this bill had a fiscal note. Through you, Madam President, to Senator Meyer.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

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The bill had a fiscal note, which says that the State will bring in more revenue because of the pilot program that will permit the Department to double the fee. So it says -- in the fiscal note, it says, "revenue gain."

THE CHAIR:

Senator Roraback.

SENATOR RORABACK:

Thank you, Madam President.

So this bill contemplates that we will be changing the fee structure for these campground reservations in a way that results in additional revenue to the State of Connecticut; is that correct? Through you, Madam President, to Senator Meyer.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President. I should say that only 5 percent of the camping sites can be used in this pilot program. And what the bill says is -- I'm quoting, "notwithstanding the schedule of fees established, the Commissioner may charge a nightly fee of not more than twice the amount charged for a similar camping site." So that's -- that's the authority that would be given for doubling the charge for someone who has got an unlimited stay at one of these sites.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Roraback.

SENATOR RORABACK:

Thank you, Madam President.

And -- and through you, to Senator Meyer.

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I believe Senator Meyer serves on the Finance Committee, Madam President.

Through you, to Senator Meyer; is that correct?

SENATOR MEYER:

I did at one time, through you, Madam President, but I no longer do.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Roraback.

SENATOR RORABACK:

Thank you.

And I do serve on the Finance Committee, Madam President, and I'm trying to remember whether we have seen this bill, which seems to have a -- a change in revenues, whether we've seen this bill in the Finance Committee.

And through you, Madam President, to Senator Meyer.

Does he know whether this bill has visited Senator Daily's committee so that it might be subjected to the watchful eye of that committee? Through you, Madam President, to Senator Meyer.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President. I -- I do not think it is -- it has visited Senator Daily's committee. I would hope that it would not. It's a very nominal difference here because it's a pilot program. It's going to run only for several months, and it can only affect 5 percent of the campsites. And it's going to be a revenue gainer for -- for us, so for all of those reasons, I'm hopeful -- hopeful it would not, and the

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screening committee did not feel it should have to go to the Finance Committee for those reasons.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thanks, Senator Meyer.

Madam President, this item might be passed temporarily.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objections, so ordered, sir.

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

On page 25, Calendar 194, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 268, AN ACT REQUIRING RETAILERS TO DISCLOSE SPECIFIC ABSORPTION RATES FOR CELLULAR TELEPHONES, favorable report of the committee on Public Health.

THE CHAIR:

Senate Bill -- Senate -- that is Senate Bill 268.

Senator -- Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Yes, Madam President, might I yield to Senator Doyle.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Doyle, will you take the yield, sir.

SENATOR DOYLE:

Yes, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

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moment?

THE CHAIR:

We'll stand at ease.

(Senate at ease.)

THE CHAIR:

Senate will come back to order.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, if we could move to the item previously marked as the next -- the next item. We had been planning to have a caucus, but apparently it's not -- not quite ready to -- to convene as of yet on the -- the education bill so if we might continue with the call of the calendar, Calendar page 36, Calendar 291, Senate Bill 85.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Calendar page 36, Number 291, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 85, AN ACT CONCERNING CAMP GROUND RESERVATIONS AT CERTAIN STATE PARKS, favorable report of the Environmental Committee and the Finance Committee.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Thank you, Madam President.

I do move acceptance of the Committee's joint and

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favorable report and move passage of this bill.

THE CHAIR:

The motions on acceptance and passage. Will you remark, sir?

SENATOR MEYER:

Thank you, I will.

Madam President, the Clerk does have a strike all amendment, which is LCO 4826 and I would ask him to call that please.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, will you please call LCO 4826?

THE CLERK:

LCO 4826, Senate Amendment A offered by Senator Meyer.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Madam President, I move adoption of this amendment and seek --

THE CHAIR:

Motions on adoption. Will you remark, please?

SENATOR MEYER:

I will.

Colleagues, this bill does two things. First of all, it codifies a practice of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection which was to allow campers at Rocky Neck and Hammonasset are two state parks on Long Island Sound to stay there at the park for three weeks, take five days off and come back for another three weeks. That is actually been a practice in part

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of DEEP -- in part by DEEP, but it has never been codified and many people have been asking us in the Environment Committee and in my district for certainty. So that certainty is given in the first part of the bill.

The other part of the bill creates a pilot program by which five percent of the campsites at Rocky Neck and Hammonasset will be open for families to spend the entire camp season, Labor Day -- I mean, sorry -- Memorial Day to Labor Day at one of those two camps. And -- and it requires a report from the DEEP Commissioner to us about how that pilot program went.

That's the summons substantive of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark? Will you remark?

Senator Roraback.

SENATOR RORABACK:

Thank you, Madam President.

Through you, if I may a few questions to the proponent of the amendment?

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR RORABACK:

Thank you, Madam President.

This a -- unless you are a camper at Hammonasset and there are many who enjoy Connecticut's signature seaside park. If you're not someone who is familiar with the practices that the DEEP uses in dolling out very coveted ocean side campsites, I think it's important for all of us to understand what this bill is doing.

So, through you if I may, Madam President, a few questions to Senator Meyer?

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THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR RORABACK:

As I understand it, Madam President, the DEEP doesn't think it's fair that somebody should camp for the entire summer at Hammonasset because if they were to allow that opportunities would disappear because the sites would be occupied by one family or one individual from May until September.

So, through you, Madam President, to Senator Meyer, is that correct that the DEEP doesn't encourage perpetual camping?

Through you, Madam President, to Senator Meyer.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President.

I think that is the policy not only of DEP, but also of the Connecticut General Assembly because it's been our policy to give as many people as possible access to these two wonderful state -- state camp grounds.

THE CHAIR:

Senator -- Senator Roraback.

SENATOR RORABACK:

Thank you, Madam President.

And so as I understand it the practice has then been that nobody could stay in one particular site for longer than three weeks and after three weeks the DEEP would make them pick up stake and pack up their belongings and go home for a minimum period of five days and then they could come and knock on the door

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again and say we'd like to camp for another three weeks.

Through you, Madam President, to Senator Meyer, is that his understanding of how the practice has worked historically.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President.

That is the practice.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Roraback.

SENATOR RORABACK:

Thank you, Madam President.

And what I'm trying to understand is the amendment before us, is it intended to codify the existing practice, or is it intended to modify the existing practice? We'll start with that question.

Through you, Madam President, to Senator Meyer.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Yes, Madam President, through you to Senator Roraback.

This intends to codify the existing practice, although that practice has not always been consistent.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Roraback.

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SENATOR RORABACK:

Thank you, Madam President.

And is the practice that's historically been followed by the DEEP was it written down anywhere? Was it in regulation? Was it in statute, or was it just their custom to impose this rule when they were dealing with Hammonasset and Rocky Neck?

Through you, Madam President to Senator Meyer.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Yes, and through you, Madam President.

It was a matter of -- of custom and practice and not of written regulation.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Roraback.

SENATOR RORABACK:

Thank you, Madam President.

So then if this bill passes, people that have been living under the custom and practice won't see any change. The DEEP will just have the comfort of knowing that their historic practice has now been codified in our statutes, is that what we're up to?

Madam President, through you to Senator Meyer?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Yes, through you, Madam President.

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This bill will create certainty on the part of both the agency and on the part of campers.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Roraback.

SENATOR RORABACK:

And what about the camper, through you Madam President, who picks up stakes after three weeks and is told they have to go home and when they're told that they look around and say, but wait a second, they're all these empty campsites. Why do I have to pick up my stuff and go home when this -- I could be paying the state to occupy one of these vacant campsites.

Through you, Madam President to Senator Meyer.

Does this bill deal with that potential phenomenon?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Yes, through you, Madam President.

The bill actually does deal with that by saying that, "DEEP can lease any vacant camping site on a first come first served basis." That's line 16 and 17 of the bill. But in -- in reality these two sites are extremely popular and so campers will not always find the ability to -- to stay there straight through, but -- but if the site is available, as the bill says campers can use it on a first come first served basis with -- without having to leave.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Roraback.

SENATOR RORABACK:

Thank you, Madam President.

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I think that makes sense. None of us would want to kick somebody out of a campground if there were sites that were going begging. So that -- that to me would seem to make common sense.

Lines 22 through 30 of the bill speak to a pilot program through which five percent of the camping sites in these parks might be leased without a limitation on the number of days leased.

Through you, Madam President to Senator Meyer.

Could he perhaps shed some light on what this pilot program is intended to accomplish?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Yes, through you, Madam President.

The fact is that we and DEEP in particular found that there are Connecticut residents many of who are retired, or are working, but are able to commute from a campsite and would like to have it for the entire camp season, namely from Memorial Day through Labor Day and therefore, what we did is we created this pilot program consisting of five percent of the campsites will be devoted to the full camping season.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Roraback.

SENATOR RORABACK:

Thank you, Madam President.

I'm -- I'm guessing that the reason it's going to be in next year's camping season is because it's going to take a little bit of doing to figure out how exactly to fairly implement this pilot program. I would hope, through you, Madam President, that the DEEP will do a lottery or some kind of fair system ask people who

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would like to rent a campsite for the entire season, invite people to apply and then pull their names out of a hat so that everyone has a fair shake at this.

Madam President, through you to Senator Meyer.

Does he know if that's what they intend to -- to do?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President.

Yes, Tom Tyler is the person at DEEP in charge of this and he has indicated to me and to the Environment Committee generally that he will be responsible for doing this in a -- in a way that makes sense. And of course, there will also be a report as the bill ends up by pointing out to us at the end of that season.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Roraback.

SENATOR RORABACK:

Thank you, Madam President.

And I appreciate Senator Meyer's answers. This state has incredible public resources in our state parks. Madam President, all of us want to make sure that tax paying citizens have an opportunity to enjoy them and the camping citizens that we open the doors to all Connecticut tax payers who want to camp.

I think this bill represents a very good faith effort on the part of the DEEP to manage an embarrassment of riches. Sadly our parks are so nice that we have more people that want to be there than we have spaces which can safely accommodate them.

So I think that this bill will help the department manage our abundance of resources in a responsible way and also treat fairly everyone who enjoys the

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unparalleled experience of sleeping out under the stars at Hammonasset State Park.

Thank you, Madam President. I thank Senator Meyer for his hard work on this bill.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senator Welch.

SENATOR WELCH:

Thank you, Madam President.

If I may, through you, Madam President, a few questions to the proponent of the bill?

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR WELCH:

So I -- I understand, Madam President, through the discussion that Senator Roraback and Senator Meyer had that essentially what we're talking about is codifying existing practice, which I guess leaves me a little -- a little bit confused as to why we would need to codify existing practice if that's what the rules were and that's what they were doing.

So if -- if I may through you, Madam President.

Why is it that we need to make this a statute if it's already a policy, or a -- a procedure.

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President.

The information that the Environment Committee got at

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the public hearing was that -- that the Department was a bit inconsistent with respect to three -- three weeks there, five days out, three weeks back. And that the campers wanted something that was clear as a matter of law. So we had at the public hearing a great deal of support from campers who came to testify.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Welch.

SENATOR WELCH:

Thank you, Madam President.

I appreciate the answer. I do note that this is a strike all amendment that we're talking about and I was trying to quickly compare the underlying bill with the strike all amendment, it looked very similar. So I had a hard time appreciating those differences.

If I might, through you, Madam President.

What -- what is different about this strike all amendment before us with respect or vis-a-vis the underlying bill.

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Oh, I'm embarrassed by that question, Madam President, because I don't -- I don't remember the underlying bill. I think it was pretty much the same and this is only a matter of wording change, but I don't have the underlying bill in front of me.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Welch.

SENATOR WELCH:

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And -- and I appreciate that it's late. I could -- I could keep reading after I'm done with these questions.

One thing I was very surprise about was at least the amount of testimony there was against what I guess what already a practice that DEEP was doing and I guess if they're already having people stay 25 days and then leave for five -- or 21 days and leave for five -- five days. Why was there this ground swell of -- of opposition? I wasn't at the public hearing and I'm hopefully Senator Meyer could comment as to that.

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Madam President, first -- first of all let me -- let me answer the Senator's first question because I just pulled the original bill.

What was added in the strike all was the -- the last provision in the strike all which relates to the Commissioner reporting to the Legislature with respect to the success of the pilot program. So that -- that was the change that was made.

I don't really any -- any opposition at the public hearing to -- to the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Welch.

SENATOR WELCH:

Thank you, Madam President.

And maybe it wasn't people who showed up, but there were a number of letters. There were comments about how this might impact the local businesses there, since it sounds like people kind of wind up staying there for a while whether they -- they're five days

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somewhere else or 21 days there and then five days someone else and then back, but it -- it -- or it might just be that people weren't -- people were staying all summer. And -- and the -- the rule that was, I guess, unofficial wasn't being enforced. So that seemed to be the nature of opposition. And, frankly, there were letters from -- from all over. Southington, Burlington, were some of the towns that I saw. But that's -- and I appreciate that.

I -- Hammonasset is a great place. I mean, it really is. I've been going there since a kid. It's wonderful to go enjoy the shores down there. I know Middlesex Hospital used to have a kite festival there for a little bit. If you ever had the chance to go to that, it was really a -- a sight to see.

And -- and there's nothing like going to Hammonasset and topping it off with Lenny and Joe's afterwards or some local ice cream. So it's a special place. It's -- it's -- it's definitely a -- a joy and a jewel in our state. I'm hoping this bill is going to be something that allows more people to -- to enjoy Hammonasset, and I thank you for your time, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Madam President.

Through you, a couple of questions to the proponent of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Please -- please proceed, sir.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Madam President.

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Senator Meyer, I believe in your conversation with Senator Roraback, you mentioned that 5 percent of the camp sites be put aside.

Through you, Madam President.

Is that correct?

SENATOR MEYER:

That's what the book -- bill provides, yes.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Madam President.

And where did that figure come from?

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

That was the suggestion of Commissioner Esty and the staff of DEEP.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Madam President.

And that 5 percent -- well, let me ask you this. How big is the entire campground in relationship to that 5 percent?

Through you, Madam President.

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THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President.

I -- I think that at Hammonasset, which is in my district, I think there are over 200 camp sites. So -- so 5 percent of 200 would be --

SENATOR KANE:

Ten.

SENATOR MEYER:

Ten.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Madam President.

I appreciate that answer. These -- I -- I've never camped at Hammonasset, I have to admit. And I've been there, but I've never took up camping. I -- to me, camping is, you know, the Hilton. But --

SENATOR MEYER:

Me too.

SENATOR KANE:

But I guess the question is, these individuals that we're referring to in the underlying bill or, quite honestly, in the strike all, tend to -- if I'm understanding this correctly, stay for a long period of time and possibly inhibit others from the same enjoyment.

Through you, is that correct, Madam President?

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THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President.

That -- that is always a concern. We want to have great access to these great parks.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Madam President.

So my question then is, I -- if they are inhibiting others from taking advantage of that opportunity, are they then taking also the prime real estate, if you will, for lack of a better term?

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Madam President, I'm sorry, I don't understand the question.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane, can you rephrase that?

SENATOR KANE:

Sure. I was just using a figure of speech, but the prime spots, closest to the beach, closest to the -- the restaurant that Senator Welch mentioned, closer to the restrooms, closer to the parking lot, I don't know, the best locations.

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Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER.

Yes, through you, Madam President.

That comes on a first-come, first-serve basis. And I'm -- I'm told by the department that people do have their favorite spots and that the campers who come to these two parks are very often the same families that come summer after summer.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

No, but -- thank you, Madam President.

My -- my question was, let's say these individuals, first-come, first-serve, they set camp at the best location. Now, I decide I'm going to take up camping and I want to set up. Am I going to be prohibited from that location because the best spots have already been taken?

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Again, as the bill says, it's first-come, first-serve. If you get there first and you know what the best sites are, you'll get them.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

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THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Madam President.

That's true. However, if -- if somebody takes that spot and never leaves, then I never have that opportunity. That's where I'm going with this.

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Okay. Under the scheduling system used by the agency, if they leave, the campsite will be available. And if you telephone in or email in, you'll be able to find out if -- if that favorable campsite is available and you can sign up for it.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Good. Okay. Thank you, Madam President.

And then -- so my question then is this 5 percent that we're referring to, is it a designated area?

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President.

That has been left in the -- in the bill up to the discretion of the department.

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THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

And so nothing came up -- thank you, Madam President -- nothing came up in the public hearing or in your conversations with the department of where they would have this 5 percent?

Through you?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President.

I don't recall any dialogue or discussion about that, although I think those of us who know Tom Tyler have confidence that he is a -- a person who will take those matters into consideration.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Madam President.

Because I -- I'm wondering how this will be kept track of. You know, do we take inventory, is there something, you know, along the lines that we can understand how this will be designated because on a first-come, first-serve basis, if this 5 percent is the best spots, then it lessens the enjoyment for the other 95 percent.

So I'm curious if there's going to be a rotating schedule, if we'll have a specific area. How do we keep track of it?

Through you, Madam President.

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THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

I'll just repeat, Madam President, that actual -- that kind of system is not set forth in this bill.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Madam President.

The reason I ask that question again because, as Senator Welch said, there -- I do believe there was some opposition to it. And it came from campers who are trying to make reservations for the summer and are unable to do so because of -- of these type of situations. So I'm -- I'm trying to get an understanding of how this will be taking place. You did say this is a pilot program?

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Yes. That's what the bill says.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Madam President.

And is it only Hammonasset?

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Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President.

No, it's not just Hammonasset. It's also Rocky Neck.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Madam President.

Do we know if there are issues at the other state parks throughout Connecticut?

Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President.

The department wanted to -- to restrict this to these two parks which are -- sit on Long Island Sound and are -- and are the most popular in the state. Indeed, Hammonasset brings more than one million visitors every year.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Madam President.

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So does this bill -- since we have one million visitors, does this bill -- do we see that maybe we'll have an increase in the number of visitors because we're not allowing certain individuals to stay the entire length of time or will this bill inhibit that one million because we're giving an opportunity for people to stay the length of time?

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President. I have no idea, but there will be a report to us, the Legislature, in 2014 under the provisions of this bill.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Madam President.

I appreciate Senator Meyer answering my questions.

I have heard from a number of constituents in regard to the issue, and I was trying to get an understanding of how the underlying bill and, of course, this strike all will satisfy those individuals when they're looking to camp this summer. So I want to have that complete understanding, so I appreciate him answering my questions.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark? Will you remark?

If not -- hi, Senator Frantz.

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SENATOR FRANTZ:

Thank you, Madam President.

I appreciate that very much.

And let me start, Madam President, by saying that if you haven't visited Hammonasset State Park, you should. I didn't hear the name of the other one, I'm not sure I have been there. But this is truly one of Connecticut's great wonderful natural resources and great assets. It's got a gorgeous beach. It's got beautiful fields, and it's just very well laid out, very easy to get to, not too far from I-95.

And -- and if you haven't, I strongly encourage you to go there and see what this is all about. I think we should, as Legislators, be thinking about how we can support the public's access to park lands and, in particular, ones that are on the shore because, especially in the summertime, it's something that is so desired by -- by everybody.

And it becomes a balancing act, I think, in terms of being able to -- to give the most access that we possibly can, not just for daily visits, but for those who actually like to go down and spend the entire summer in a place like that, certainly at night. And also making sure that we don't -- we don't deter people from making the trip to Hammonasset and enjoying that beautiful park.

So, through you, Madam President, I have a couple of questions for Senator Meyer who has worked so hard on this bill.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR FRANTZ:

Thank you, Madam President.

Through you.

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Senator Meyer, thank you so much for all of your work on this bill. I think that given that it's a pilot program, I think it's going to deliver us some great information after the initial phases are done.

But my question to you -- through you, Madam President -- is do we know what the -- are -- are there capacity constraints? Do we know that during the summer months we have turn-aways at this particular park?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President.

Yes, we do.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Frantz.

SENATOR FRANTZ:

So is it safe to assume -- through you, Madam President -- that the park for -- take one standard deviation, about two-thirds of the summer, two months out of the three, that the campground is full to the brim and people are getting turned away?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President.

That's the information that the department has given to me.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Frantz.

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SENATOR FRANTZ:

Thank you. Okay. That adds a -- a new dimension to this because there's no question that we have to look at this very carefully. And, again, I think your bill here does this because it's a pilot program. If we don't get it right in this experimental phase, we can certainly suggest that it gets changed the next time around.

I -- I have the same concerns that Senator Kane has. I'm looking at the map of this campground now, Madam President, and -- and it's -- it's clear that there are some campground spaces that are much more desirable than others. Some are pond-front, some are near the amphitheater, some are near a field, some are indeed close to the beach, which is why most people go to this park in the first place.

And, through you, Madam President, I'm -- I'm just wondering if Senator Meyer, in his deliberations with DEEP, took this into account in trying to come up with the best solution for those who wish to stay there all summer long?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you -- you, Madam President.

Yes, I did.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Frantz.

SENATOR FRANTZ:

I'm sorry, I missed that answer.

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

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Yes. Yes, sir.

SENATOR FRANTZ:

Yes. Thank you. Okay. So I -- I think it's worth trying this. I can only envision that there will be more e-mails to all of us Legislators as people become frustrated with those who inevitably learn how to game the system. And they will, in fact, do so. And they will go for those beachfront campsites and pay -- I think it's 150 percent in the bill. And, hopefully, it doesn't lead to too many frustrated people, because we want all of the citizens of Connecticut, and those outside of the state of Connecticut, to come and enjoy our natural resources. So I -- I'm comfortable -- I'm comfortable with -- with the bill.

And, again, Senator Meyer, thank you for your hard work on this. I know you're devoted to the environment and I know you're devoted to the all-important process of making sure that people get to enjoy these natural resources, and doing it on -- on a fair basis. And I think you've done that here.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Thank you, Senator Meyer.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.

Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the amendment? Will you remark further on the amendment?

I'll try your minds. All those in favor of Senate Amendment "A", please identify by saying aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Those opposed, nay.

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The ayes have it. Senate "A" is adopted.

Will you remark further on the bill as amended?

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Mr. President, I do appreciate the questions that have been asked. I think we fleshed the bill out, and I'm hopeful that this could go by consent. No, it will not go -- I -- I ask for a roll call, Mr. President.

Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.

Is there objection to placing this item on the consent calendar?

Seeing no objection, Mr. Clerk, please announce the pendency of a roll call vote. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. All senators please return to the Chamber.
An immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
THE CHAIR:

Senate Boucher, you'd like to vote?

Senator Welch.

Have all members voted? All members have voted?

Please check the board to make sure your vote is accurately recorded.

If all members have voted, the machine will be closed and the Clerk will announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

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Senate Bill 85,

Total Number Voting	33
Necessary for Passage	17
Those Voting Yea	30
Those Voting Nay	3
Those Absent and Not Voting	3

THE CHAIR:

The bill as amended passes.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I would move that the items adopted on Senate Agenda Number 2 be placed on the Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

And, Mr. President, would ask the Clerk to call next calendar page 38, Calendar 412, Senate Bill 354.

THE CHAIR.

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Calendar page 38, Number 412, Senate Bill Number 354,
AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENHANCED EMERGENCY 9-1-1
PROGRAM, favorable report of the Finance Committee and
the Public Safety Committee.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Daily.

SENATOR DAILY: