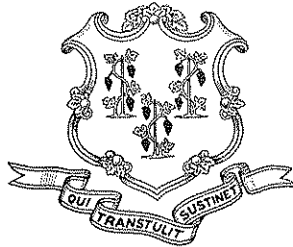


SENATOR JONATHAN A. HARRIS

Legislative Office Building
Room 3000
Hartford, CT 06106-1591
Tel. (860) 240-0567
Fax (860) 240-5306
Harris@senatedems.ct.gov
www.SenatorHarris.cga.ct.gov



State of Connecticut

SENATE
Fifth District

Chief Assistant Majority Leader

Chair

Public Health Committee

Vice Chair

Planning & Development Committee

Member

Appropriations Committee
Regulations Review Committee

April 7, 2010

The Hon 1st Selectman Herbst,
members of the Town council and the Residents of Trumbull

Due to my position as the Senate Co-Chair of the Public Health Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly, residents of Trumbull contacted my office with health and safety concerns connected to a proposal by a privately owned company, Fuel Cell Energy, LLC, to build a natural gas powered fuel cell power plant in the midst of their residential neighborhood.

I recently met with some of the residents and toured the proposed site. In walking the site, I witnessed people on bikes, jogging and children playing soccer on the very location that Fuel Cell Energy has proposed to build a potentially dangerous facility. There are no commercial buildings in sight. There are only beautiful homes, families, and even an herb farm directly across the street (which I was told still operates on the honor system). The site is also right on the edge of an historic district. As I attempted to picture this type of facility in the middle of this beautiful neighborhood, safety concerns, noise and odor emissions and the potential for a catastrophic incident became evident. There will be absolutely no buffer between this plant and the neighborhood.

The residents and I discussed the current laws and regulatory scheme (or the lack thereof) in place that essentially allow these types of facilities, with little or no way for citizens also to protect themselves. This is a crucial issue to not only to the residents of Trumbull, but for our entire state.

Although I am a strong proponent of clean energy, including fuel cells, and related green initiatives, I am not a proponent of risking the health, welfare, and well-being of citizens. Health and safety come first. We need to balance our need to promote fuel cells and green energy against the health and safety of our residents. There may well be appropriate places for these types of power plants. Let's work together to find them. It is, however, hard to fathom how a residential neighborhood would be one of them.

Based upon the information I have gathered, I agree that this proposed power plant should not be built in this residential location or on any similar site in our state. Building such a facility as proposed in Trumbull, raises concerns that should be addressed by our state legislature as soon as possible.

I respect and find encouragement in the active, responsible, way this community is addressing this crucial issue. I will do everything within my power to work with the residents, local officials and my colleagues in Hartford to make the changes needed.

I also offer to meet with the private company and any other interested party to discuss alternative ways to develop our green industries and rely more on green power without jeopardizing health and safety.

Your consideration of my observations are much appreciated.