

Environment Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6278

AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF ALTERNATIVES TO ANIMAL TESTING METHODS AND REQUIRING THE USE OF BIODIESEL BLENDING METHODS

Title: FOR CERTAIN DIESEL FUELS.

Vote Date: 3/28/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/24/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Environment Committee

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REASONS FOR BILL:

The welfare of animals subject to research testing, and the conditions in which they live, have increasingly become of public interest and concerns. These ethical concerns reflect a broader national trend toward employing more humane methods during research and development processes. These trends have coincided with (and been supported by) advancements in technology, which have made alternative methods of research and testing more feasible and accurate. The requirement to utilize, when available, test methods other than those using live animals would encourage animal welfare and alleviate some ethical concerns.

The combustion of diesel fuel (the focus of Section 2 of the proposed bill), essential in our economy, creates concerns about sustainability and greenhouse gas emissions. An inherent part of our transportation systems and economy, diesel engines are currently crucial to our society, yet they produce significant negative emissions and use a finite fuel source.

Reducing the percentage of petrochemicals in diesel fuel could help improve sustainability of the fuel source in general and reduce the gas emissions from combustion. There is also rising demand among the public for cleaner energy options.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Katie S. Dykes, Commissioner, CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection

DEEP Opposes Section 2 of HB 6278. Section 2(a) of this bill would institute a phased-in mandate starting with a minimum 5% biodiesel content for diesel sold for use in internal combustion engines by July 1st of this year. The biodiesel blending requirement increases to a 10% minimum by July 1, 2027, and again increases to a 20% minimum by July 1, 2029. When these requirements are added to the existing biodiesel blending requirements for heating oil in Section 16a-21b, the ramp up of demand would require scaling of production and associated supply chains to ensure fuel availability, reliability and to avoid significant cost impacts to consumers. Section (b) of the bill would apply to the state fleet requiring that diesel-fueled vehicles, vessels, and construction equipment operate on a minimum of 5% by volume biodiesel mixture by volume by July 1, 2025, and a minimum of 20% by July 1, 2027. DEEP does not support expanding the biodiesel mandate without conducting further research. Also of concern are emission impacts and potential benefits associated with the increased combustion and manufacturing associated with an increased biodiesel blending mandate; and corrosive properties and impacts to storage tanks.

Garrett T. Eucalitto, Commissioner, CT Department of Transportation

The CT Department of Transportation has major concerns with HB 6278. The department is the operator of the state's largest diesel-powered fleet, consuming over 5,500,000 gallons annually, this mandate would have significant cost implications and operational challenges. This blending would require altering their purchase practices based on time of year, procurement would be complicated, they would have limited vendors to select from and costs would be higher. Also, several types of equipment used by the department are incompatible with mixes of biodiesel.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Vicki Katrinak, Director, Animal Research & Testing, Humane World for Animals

The Humane World of Animals supports the alternatives to animal testing methods portion of HB 6278. This bill will ensure that product manufacturers and testing laboratories are using techniques to assess the safety of products such as cosmetics, household cleaners, pesticides, and industrial chemicals as soon as they are approved for use by the relevant regulatory agencies. It will not impact testing done for medical research including testing for pharmaceutical products or medical devices. The outdated and inhumane tests are being replaced with non-animal testing strategies that more closely mimic how the human body respond to chemical substances.

Elias Petersen, Vice President & General Counsel Kolmar Americas, Inc, American Green Fuels

American Green Fuels is a 50 million gallon per year biodiesel production facility located at the Port of New Haven. The plant utilizes waste feedstocks such as used cooking oil to produce a renewable fuel that results in up to a 93% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions compared to traditional petroleum diesel. They sent in testimony stating that there is more than adequate supply to establish a minimum biodiesel content also biodiesel is not the cause of heating oil tank failures. We believe they fail for a variety of reasons, which could include the effect of sulfur content and the bacteria existing in the free water in tanks. They state that biodiesel is a cleaner fuel than petroleum diesel. Policies like HB 6278 have been implemented in other states with little to no issues.

Stephen Sack, President, Sack Energy Corp.

Sack Energy Corp is a 5th generation energy provider in the State of Connecticut and over 10 years in selling renewable liquid fuels. As one of the largest Biodiesel wholesalers in Southern New England they testified that there would be no issue with supply of biodiesel. The price of biodiesel has been higher and less than traditional diesel fuel and biodiesel does not cause fuel tanks to leak. Today the State could use Biodiesel in Transit busses, trains, snowplows, school busses and DOT trucks without any changes made to the equipment.

Amanda Fox, Executive Director, Animal Right Initiative

The Animal Rights Initiative sent in testimony supporting HB6278 stating that the FDA Modernization Act 2023, the federal requirement for animal testing in drug and biologic development was officially removed. HB 6278 states that is a scientifically superior alternative exists; it must be used. There testimony shows that there are signs that animal testing is not only unethical-it is scientifically unreliable and inefficient.

Over 65 Residents of Connecticut sent in Testimony in Support of HB 6278 on the Act Concerning the Use of Alternatives to Animal Testing Methods.

They support alternative testing methods that represent an advance in ethical, scientific, and environmental standards for testing and research.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Savonne Caughey, Vice President of Government Relations, Pet Food Institute

The Pet Food Institute opposes HB 6278 because they believe a mandate for biodiesel fuels that use or include animal and plant-based oils and fats that are used in human and pet food would disadvantage the feed industry by increasing ingredient cost, risking supply shortages, and adding another layer of stress to pet food makers.

Smantha Dynowski, State Director, Sierra Club Connecticut

The Sierra Club opposes HB 6278 on there concerns with tailpipe emissions. The US Department of Energy analysis shows an increasing percent of NOx emissions as biofuel blending percentages increase. Pollution from vehicle tailpipes mix with sunlight to form smog, making the summer month the worst for air quality in cities. Smog causes chronic respiratory illnesses resulting in asthma attacks, bronchitis, and premature death. Also there are no protections in this bill to ensure that the required levels of blending will avoid unintended consequences related to feedstocks and possible shortages of waste oil.

Brennan Georgianni, Associate Vice President, American Cleaning Institute

The American Cleaning Institute shares the to goal of transitioning away from animal testing but there are unique federal rules governing cleaning products. HB 6278 would impose additional regulatory burdens that conflict with existing federal guidelines and requirements and could complicate efforts to comply. Additionally, FIFRA establishes preemption over states when it comes to certain aspects of products under its jurisdiction. Under these federal provisions, this bill potentially creates a legally unconstitutional burden on manufacturers.

Reported by: Judy Ganswindt

Date: April 2, 2025