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Governor Dannel Malloy  
State of Connecticut  
State Capitol  
210 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106  
860-566-4840

Commissioner Robert Klee  
Department of Energy & Environmental Protection  
79 Elm Street  
Hartford, CT 06106  
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Dear Governor Malloy and Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection Commissioner Klee:

As County Executive in Albany County, New York I am strongly opposed to the State of Connecticut sending 116,000 tons of trash to Albany County each year to be burned at a cement plant, located on the banks of the Hudson River in Albany County. I find it equally troubling that the residents of Albany County and their elected officials have not been contacted in advance to determine what we think about this misguided proposal. I am writing to urge you to immediately take this proposal out of consideration.

There is a long history of waste incineration polluting the environment. Local governments in Albany County have moved away from trash incineration years ago, and saw the state-run incinerator in the City of Albany close in 1994.

This proposal the State of Connecticut is considering is one of three finalists that may be chosen by the end of this month. Connecticut Public Act No. 14-94 states that the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection "may" select one of these three final proposals on or before December 31, 2017 and direct the Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority to enter into an agreement for redevelopment of the aging trash incinerator in Hartford, known as the Connecticut Solid Waste Management System Project. I understand the need to replace this old incinerator. However, I object to replacing it with waste burning in Albany County.


The proposal by Mustang Renewable Power Ventures would have some recyclables removed from the trash from 70 Connecticut towns, and the rest would be baled, shipped to the LafargeHolcim cement plant in Ravena, New York shredded, and burned in their kiln. This LafargeHolcim plant has long been of the largest air polluters in New York State. Trash is a dirtier fuel than coal by many measures. It is more polluting even when burned in trash incinerators that are equipped with more air pollution controls than coal plants typically have. We are not willing to become the host for 116,000 tons/year of Connecticut's trash.

Prince George's County, Maryland recently went through a similar process to yours, evaluating various "waste-to-energy" schemes, and choosing seven finalists, including two of the three being considered by DEEP: Mustang Renewable Power and Covanta. After much time and money was spent pursuing these proposals, the county abandoned their entire contract process in August 2016, scrapping all of the proposals and moving forward with development of a Zero Waste Plan with much public involvement from community stakeholders.

The other two proposals DEEP is considering rely on incineration in your own backyard, either in Hartford or Bristol. Trash incineration is the most expensive and polluting way to manage waste and an expensive way to generate energy. It still sends toxic ash to landfills. The best option in terms of air pollution, global warming is a Zero Waste approach with no incineration. New York wisely does not recognize trash burning as a renewable energy source.

We recommend that you follow the lead of Prince George's County by dropping the current three proposals and developing a strong Zero Waste Plan that does not rely on of incineration. I respectfully request that you do not consider sending Connecticut's trash to be burned in Albany County. The proposal will be met with strong public opposition. Residents of Albany County have a deep commitment to improving the environment in the beautiful Hudson Valley. This proposal would pollute our air, and is the last thing that should be done near the banks of the historic Hudson River. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience on this urgent matter. Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
Daniel P. McCoy  
Albany County Executive