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Connecticut Chapter
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Environment Committee
February 9, 2007

Testimony of Martin Mador

In Support of
SB 1032 an Act Reducing Diesel Emissions in School Bus Cabins
SB 988 an Act Prohibiting the Idling of Motor Vehicles

I am Martin Mador, 130 Highland Ave., Hamden, CT 06518. I am the Legislative and Political Chair of the Connecticut Sierra Club, and am here today representing our 11,000 Connecticut members concerned about the health of our environment. I am also here as the legislative co-chair of the Connecticut Foundation for Environmentally Safe Schools.

The two bills I will be discussing each address priorities of the Sierra Club and ConnFESS for the 2007 legislative session. All are important bills which should be enacted.

SB 1032 would reduce children's exposure to the diesel pollution that enters school bus cabins by using pollution controls to reduce tailpipe emissions. We know that maturing children's bodies are far more sensitive to environmental toxins than are adults. It is especially important that we protect the health of our children. Particulates in diesel emissions can lodge deep in the lungs, and contribute to a host of problems, including asthma. As we know, there is an asthma epidemic in the state, with almost 10% of our children affected. Harm from exposure to diesel emissions while riding in school buses is preventable. This is an important bill.

SB 988 calls for making the anti-idling law enforceable by local police. Extended motor vehicle idling creates unnecessary pollution, and serves no useful purpose. The bill contains an exemption for low temperatures, so it does not impose an unreasonable burden on motorists. Without this bill, the current law is meaningless, as there is no feasible enforcement.