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**TESTIMONY RE: PROPOSED BILL 988, AN ACT PROHIBITING IDLING OF
MOTOR VEHICLES**
Environment Committee Hearing
February 9, 2006

Good morning Senator Finch and Representative Roy and members of the Environment Committee.

Thank-you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Nurses' Association (CNA), the professional organization for registered nurses in Connecticut. I am Dr. Mary Jane Williams, past-president of the Connecticut Nurses' Association current chairperson of its Government Relations Committee and professor of nursing at the University of Hartford. I have practiced nursing for over 40 years and have been educating nurses in Connecticut for 35 years. I am providing testimony in support of Proposed Bill. No. 988, AN ACT PROHIBITING IDLING OF MOTOR VEHICLES.

In supporting this bill, Connecticut Nurses' Association joins our colleagues from the Connecticut Clean Cars Alliance, a broad-based group of health, business and environmental organizations that have come together to protect our environment and help clean up our air. We are proud of the legislative successes of the Alliance that have helped to decrease the vehicle emission standards for cars sold in Connecticut – but more needs to be done.

The enactment of PB 988 will promote cleaner air for the residents of Connecticut by prohibiting idling of motor vehicles except in necessary cases. Idling wastes fuel, adds to the production of green house gases that are contributing to global climate changes but most importantly increases many illnesses like cardiovascular disease, asthma and diabetes that are exacerbated by air pollution.

As health care professionals we know first hand the problems created by poor air quality especially as it affects the health of our children and our elderly. Connecticut's air quality is the poorest in New England. Reducing vehicle emissions will have the two-fold affect of providing cleaner air as well as reducing greenhouse gas pollution that is causing global warming.

Our children are especially vulnerable to the dangers caused by air pollution. Their airways are smaller than adults, they breathe more rapidly, they inhale more pollutants per pound of body weight than adults, and they often spend more time in vigorous outdoor activities than adults (Children's Environmental Health Network).

- The health effects associated with both indoor and outdoor air pollution are increased acute respiratory illnesses, aggravation of asthma and more visits to health care providers for coughs and ear infections.
- The social and emotional effects impact these children who are not able to live fully or enjoy activities that their peers take for granted.
- The economics of these respiratory diseases affect parents and our health care system with absenteeism, costs of medications and increased health care visits for chronic illness.

This legislation will have a positive effect on the health of Connecticut's residents and the most vulnerable among us. It will add to the other successful initiatives that are helping to clean up our air. It will add to Connecticut's reputation as a national leader in reducing air pollution and fighting global warming.

Thank you and we encourage the committee to vote favorably to support this bill.