Testimony of

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Before the

Michigan Senate Energy and Technology Committee

May 15th, 2012 / 1 p.m. / Boji Tower / Lansing, MI 48933

Chairman Nofs ...Vice Chairmen Proos and Hopgood ... Distinguished members of the Senate Energy and Technology Committee ... Good morning and thank you for this opportunity to address you on House Bills 4265 and 4266.

For the record, my name is Kenneth Cole. I am a principle with the multi-client lobbying firm Governmental Consultant Services Inc. and lead lobbyist for the City of Detroit at the state Capitol.

On behalf of Detroit Mayor Dave Bing and the residents of Michigan's largest city, I first want to thank Representatives Ken Horn and Paul Opsommer for sponsoring this innovative legislation that seeks to permit the disposal of yard clippings in a landfill licensed as a ***"landfill energy production facility."***

The City of Detroit enthusiastically supports this endeavor but desires an amendment that would also allow incineration of yard clippings. Please know that the city made this request in the House but acquiesced at the request of Representatives Horn and Opsommer to facilitate movement of the legislation through that chamber.

Know, though, that Detroit's amendment would comport with – *not detract from* – the thrust of House Bills 4265 and 4266, which aim to ***"recover (methane) gas ... for the generation of electricity, a direct fuel use, or any other use as a substitute for conventional fuels."***

Here's why:

- The City of Detroit currently incinerates its municipal solid waste at the Greater Detroit Resource Recovery Authority – more commonly known as GDRRA, which is licensed as a Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) Facility.

- As is the case with solid-waste landfills, incinerators currently cannot accept yard clippings, pursuant existing Michigan law. Rather, yard clippings must be collected separately by – *and at more expense to* – local units of government.

- House Bills 4265 and 4266 would make an exception for yard clippings to be sent to landfills with a gas collection system, recognizing said gas would be intended for ***"on-site or "off-site energy use."***

- Well, another type of renewable energy is steam, and GDRRA right now is the primary supplier of steam to numerous Downtown Detroit businesses.

  Specifically, the incinerator provides low cost steam to Detroit Thermal. Said steam is subsequently used to heat and cool more than 162 buildings in the downtown loop, including the venerable Fox Theatre, the Renaissance Center, the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Detroit Medical Center.

- The Detroit Department of Public Works currently collects roughly 6,000 tons of yard clippings annually that, if it could be incinerated, would augment the supply of steam energy in Downtown Detroit. It also holds the promise of electricity conversion, as well.

- Amending House Bills 4265 and 4266 to permit incineration of yard clippings would also save consumers and locals money …

  - Consumers because they wouldn't have to purchase special paper bags for yard waste.

  - And locals because municipal workers could streamline their solid-waste collection, hauling and processing efforts, which currently cost Detroit about $9 million a year.

  Given these tough economic times – symbolized by a rash of Michigan municipalities grappling with financial challenges – the Legislature would be wise to tender policies that can mitigate residents and locals' costs.

- Lastly, note that burning yard clippings would have no adverse effect on GDRRA emissions or Michigan Air Reporting Systems.

I could continue but do not wish to belabor the point. Simply put: Amending House Bills 4265 and 4266 to allow for incineration of yard clippings is the prudent thing to do.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration of my remarks. I appreciate your forbearance and welcome any questions from the committee.