

**For Immediate Release****Date:** March 12, 2009**Subject:** Testimony by David N. Hurwitt, Vice President, Optiwind Corp, before the Committee on Energy and Technology, Connecticut General Assembly regarding Bill 1104, *An Act Concerning Net-Metering*

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Good morning and thank you for your continued leadership on this issue and the opportunity to add our voice to the many others who have come before you to help shape this important legislation.

As Connecticut's first and only dedicated wind turbine manufacturer, I can tell you that continuing to evolve the Net Metering legislation in our State is of vital importance to our mission of building Connecticut's installed wind energy base and putting potentially hundreds of our fellow citizens to work in this endeavor.

Currently, the state of energy production and consumption here in Connecticut is a bleak one. We rank dead last in the United States in terms of installed wind energy production with zero commercial or industrial wind installations. We also rank dead last in the continental United States in terms of the price our citizens pay for electricity. We pay more for a kilowatt hour of electricity than anyone else in the country outside of Hawaii. Last and last.

On top of this, in any given month in Connecticut, we also burn up roughly 30,000 barrels of mostly foreign oil; 200,000 tons of coal; and 4.5 billion cubic feet of natural gas to produce our electricity. All fossils fuels and all serious pollutants.

Net metering, at its heart, is an enabler for distributed generation – putting your alternative generation assets at the point of use. The problem in Connecticut, and the reason we are currently in last place in installed wind is that the existing legislation does not take into consideration the unique confluence of geography, transmission, population, and wind resource in our state. So my message to you today is, please "Connecticut-ize" our net metering law.

Our state is marked by high population density, relatively small residential and commercial lot sizes, a space constrained transmission and distribution network, and a bountiful but fragmented wind resource. Across the state, there are several hundred pockets of Class 2 and above wind that are capable of producing economically viable electricity. The problem, however, is that many of these pockets of wind do not precisely overlap the building where the distributed generation is desired.

At Optiwind, we often evaluate potential locations for distributed wind turbines based on their W.I.L.L. This is an acronym for the strength of their Wind, Interest, Load and Land. A customer with all four of these elements is hard to find in Connecticut. Either they have the Interest and Load, or the Wind and the Land, but rarely all four. By Connecticut-izing this legislation to allow customers to install wind and/or solar generation without requiring all four and you DRAMATICALLY increase the size and viability of the alternative generation market in Connecticut.

You allow towns with windy hilltops and shorelines to power their schools and municipal facilities; you allow companies with multiple locations to share their available alternative generation resources without penalty; you allow churches to be powered by wind from a member's property; and you allow groups of home owners to come together to invest in alternative generation at one location so that it can be economically shared among all locations.

By adopting these changes to the existing net metering law, you Connecticut-ize it and truly unlock its potential and empower our citizens to affect the type of change that will benefit us all.

Thank you.