

RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
ATTORNEY GENERAL



55 Elm Street
P.O. Box 120
Hartford, CT 06141-0120

Office of The Attorney General
State of Connecticut

*TESTIMONY OF
ATTORNEY GENERAL RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
BEFORE THE ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
MARCH 17, 2009*

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 1130, An Act Concerning Energy and the State's Economy.

This proposal makes numerous changes to the Electric Efficiency Partner Program including encouraging the development of energy management technologies, establishing a council to review and approve applications for state grants for such technologies and coordinates such grants with loans from the Clean Energy Fund.

I support the concept of providing incentives and streamlined process for reducing energy use. Connecticut must become a leader in conserving electricity, oil and natural gas. Conservation will reduce pollution and carbon dioxide emissions as well as our dependency on non-renewable sources of energy. We can also promote conservation technology as an economic development and jobs creation program.

The legislation should be amended to make sure that electricity ratepayer dollars are devoted solely to electric efficiency programs, as now happens. Similarly, the Fuel Oil Conservation Board programs are funded through fuel oil tax revenues. I have opposed attempts to raid the Electricity Conservation and Management Board funds for general fund purposes. Ratepayers have paid millions of dollars after promises that those funds would be used to reduce our electricity demands, and benefit ratepayers in the long run. For the same reason, those funds should not be used for natural gas or fuel oil measures.

I urge the committee to amend Senate Bill 1130 to fund energy conservation programs from revenues directly related to those energy sources. The committee should also ensure that the funds are expended in a manner consistent with the state's overall goals for electricity conservation as contained in the Comprehensive Integrated Resource Plan. Finally, the committee should establish a review process through the Department of Public Utility Control that can verify the funded projects meet strict cost/benefit goals and promote economic development and jobs.

Thank you.