

Connecticut Fund
for the Environment

February 3, 2009

TO: The Honorable Memebers of the Public Safety Committee
FROM: Letitia L. Ferguson, Outreach Director

RE: HB6284, AAC Adoption of a Model Energy Code and Green Building Standards.

Connecticut has been a leader in state energy efficiency policy, and this measure will help to keep us in the forefront of environmentally sustainable development standards.

It is well established that buildings are the site of enormous energy consumption and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and grossly inefficient in their energy use.

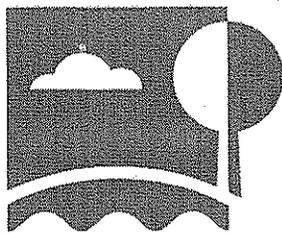
Energy efficiency is the cheapest, most reliable, and climate-friendly way of meeting energy needs. Wise investment in improving building energy efficiency can save ratepayers money and earn investors an attractive return.

“Retrofitting” buildings with current materials and technology to gain energy efficiency requires a lot of labor — ranging from essentially unskilled to very skilled — which means jobs creation.

Energy efficiency standards improvement has no capital investment cost – just better planning & oversight for the future.

For these reasons, I urge you to vote for HB6284, AAC Adoption of a Model Energy Code and Green Building Standards.

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for the Environment

February 3, 2009

Dear Senator Stillman, Representative Dargan, and members of the Public Safety and Security Committee,

I write regarding Raised Bill No. 6284, AN ACT CONCERNING ADOPTION OF A MODEL ENERGY CODE AND GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS.

Representatives of the construction industry have indicated both their openness to new green building and energy efficiency standards and their frustration with the existing language, which is not specific enough for them to plan around. I applaud the committee for its efforts to clarify the standards, as this will streamline the code's implementation and get the green, efficient building industry working to improve the state's air quality and construction market.

I urge the committee to approve a bill with standards that are as ambitious, specific, and clear as possible. The language should identify quantitative targets for energy efficiency and specify which buildings will be covered by the changes.

A strong, detailed Energy Code and Green Building Standards bill will help Connecticut's construction industry by communicating clearly and early what the requirements will be so that architects, engineers, and construction companies can plan ahead and design appropriately. This will save the companies money and create new high-skilled jobs and new entry-level jobs in the green building field.

At the same time, it will reduce emissions quickly and cost-effectively. To meet our carbon reduction mandates, we must institute aggressive efficiency measures that will eliminate the need for some fossil fuel-burning power plants. That will have great impacts on our state's air quality, reducing health costs and improving quality of life for people with asthma and other health problems. Efficiency improvements can do this at very low or no cost to the state.

Finally, improvements to energy efficiency will benefit consumers directly by reducing their energy bills. Studies have shown that saving energy through improved efficiency is three to four times cheaper than buying that energy would be, even if the energy were generated by our cheapest, dirtiest coal-fired plants. Efficiency measures also help reduce peak demand, which means that electrical generation and distribution charges would drop. When consumers save money on their utility bills, they are able to spend it elsewhere, which boosts the state's overall economy.

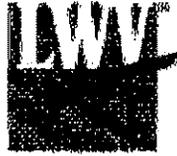
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A bill with clear requirements is our best bet to get these benefits accruing rapidly and reliably.

Sincerely,
Laura McMillan
Global Warming Outreach Associate, CT Fund for the Environment

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CC:
Sen. Martin Looney
Rep. Cam Staples



**Public Safety Committee
Public Hearing
February 3, 2009**

Submitted by: Lynn Taborsak, Climate Change Specialist

Comments on:

RB 6284: AAC Adoption of a Model Energy Code and Green Building Standards

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut is a non-partisan, statewide organization comprised of nearly 2,400 members and committed to effective public policy and the active involvement of citizens in their government. On behalf of the League, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

Energy is finite. We need to make energy conservation and energy efficiency of paramount importance in our state building code going forward. If we succeed in making new construction and major renovations part of a new green infrastructure, there will be enough energy left to create jobs and grow the state's economy. We don't have time or energy to waste this year.

This bill can be strengthened to require that new buildings exceed the ASHRAE 90.1 standard by 10% or 20% or earn a silver rating under the LEED system. It is also important to define what buildings will be required to meet the new standards. Will it include public projects and schools as well as private sector development?

The League believes that green building standards will reduce energy use and thereby reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Efficient lighting and natural light, energy efficient heating and cooling equipment, passive and active solar design and improved insulation can dramatically reduce energy use. Not wasting energy provides us with the energy we will need for industrial uses.

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To the Public Safety and Security Committee

February 3, 2009

Dear Legislators,

My name is Judi Friedman. I reside at 101 Lawton Rd in Canton and I am Chair of PACE (PEOPLE'S ACTION FOR CLEAN ENERGY). Our organization is deeply interested in green building codes and energy efficient technologies. These concepts not only provide health benefits but also spawn jobs and help electricity costs.

We are very pleased that this bill is under consideration but we support the position of the Connecticut Fund for the Environment in its concern about the failure of the bill to identify specific energy targets and to define what buildings will be subject to the heightened requirements.

Thank you for your good work in the important field of environmental energy issues.

Sincerely,

Judi Friedman