

HB 5362: AN ACT CONCERNING RENEWABLE ENERGY

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I am a graduate engineer in land resources and come here with 30 years of experience with PACE (People's Action for Clean Energy), the largest volunteer renewable energy group in Connecticut.

Energy and Technology Committee: the only path to a successful future for this state and its residents is the path of non-fossil, non-nuclear, renewable energy. The Connecticut state economy, jobs, energy efficiency, and personal health and safety depend on a committed future to energy sourced from the sun, wind, water, earth, algae, waste products, mushrooms, or whatever else can be discovered or invented. Along with conservation measures and efficiency, we must encourage research into and construction and installation of the gamut of renewable sources.

HB 5362 is a wonderful bill for solar photovoltaics and natural gas. However, natural gas is a non-renewable fossil fuel. If fuel cells are powered by solar produced hydrogen, then the fuel cell is renewable. However, because Connecticut is involved in the fuel cell industry, I can support this natural gas inclusion in the bill as a temporary condition.

Another shortcoming in HB 5362 is that no mention of electricity being produced by any other renewable means than solar is included. Again, because it so important to get moving on the renewable project, I can support the bill, with this shortcoming as a temporary condition.

I'm already proud of our state's Clean Energy Fund and the tremendous strides we have taken in support of solar photovoltaics. I'm proud that solar thermal has just been added to this program. I'm proud of the recent solar leasing plan and wish it could continue. But solar is just one leg of the energy table.

HB 5362 should be a good beginning to a renewed Connecticut with renewable energy.