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Written Testimony of Christopher Phelps, Environment Connecticut Program Director
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Energy & Technology Committee
Tuesday, March 16, 2010

Supporting HB 5508, AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE DIVISION OF ELECTRICITY
POLICY AND PROCUREMENT

Representative Nardello, Senator Fonfara, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony supporting HB 5508. Environment Connecticut is a statewide, member-supported non-profit environmental advocacy organization. One of our top priorities is advocacy for clean energy policies that benefit our environment and strengthen our economy.

We support the goal of this bill to end the fragmentation of Connecticut's varied energy policies and programs. Requiring greater coordination of energy policy implementation should help Connecticut more effectively control energy costs, maximize energy efficiency outcomes and transition from polluting, increasingly expensive energy sources to cleaner, renewable energy.

We offer these comments on specific sections of HB 5508 as follows:

Section 2:

We support having a Public Utilities Control Authority assume responsibility for implementation of the Integrated Resource Plan. We hope that such a change will help ensure that the requirement that the statutory requirement that the utilities procure all cost effective efficiency before procuring generation is faithfully implemented.

Section 13:

There has been a lot of public discussion on the subject of "green jobs" before the legislature in 2010. While we strongly support the goal of this section to promote job growth in "green" sectors, we suggest that the language be clarified to specifically focus on growth in clean energy and energy efficiency industries. (Instead of the vague "green job" description. Additionally, we suggest that the agency be directed to coordinate such activities with other public entities.

Section 14:

In order to ensure a diversity of experience, and a diversity of stakeholder representation, we urge the committee to amend the experience required for new commissioners by replacing “environmental management” with “environmental protection or regulation” in line 574.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony supporting HB 5508.

Sincerely,

Christopher Phelps
Program Director
Environment Connecticut