



# Rivers Alliance of Connecticut

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A tax-exempt  
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## ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING

February 23, 2010

### **Bill 181 AA REDEFINING CLASS I RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES**

### **Bill 5213 AAC THE SITING COUNCIL**

*Rivers Alliance of Connecticut is the statewide, non-profit coalition of river organizations, individuals, and businesses formed to protect and enhance Connecticut's waters by promoting sound water policies, uniting and strengthening the state's many river groups, and educating the public about the importance of water stewardship.*

Dear Chairmen Nardello and Fonfara and Members of the Committee:

Rivers Alliance of Connecticut is pleased to testify in favor of both the above bills, with suggestions for extending each somewhat.

Bill Number 181 proposes to extend the definition of Class I Hydropower to include additional power up to 10 MW generated by efficiencies in existing plants. Increases in efficiency, along with reduction in demand, are the keys to solving numerous problems associated with climate change and energy costs. Moreover, this bill specifically requires approval by the Low-Impact Hydropower Institute, which, for us, is the paramount standard. We would support rewarding a gain higher than 10 MW as long as the project is certified by the Low-Impact Hydropower Institute.

Bill Number 5213 strengthens the authority of the Siting Council to elicit true facts and enforce its decisions. Rivers Alliance has been concerned for several years that the authority of the Siting Council over power plants has been critically weakened at a time when there is a rush to hurry new power-generation projects into operation. We support Bill 5213, and strongly urge additional changes to reinstate Siting Council authority over environmental impacts of new power plants up to 65MW. This authority was severely curtailed and possibly eliminated in Public Act 05-1, AAC Energy Independence. The Siting Council is mandated to grant approval by declaratory ruling rather than having the authority to require the applicant to meet the criteria