

Written testimony of Gordon Schies
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Energy and Technology Committee
March 4, 2010

Written testimony *in support* of House Bill 5362, AN ACT CONCERNING RENEWABLE
ENERGY

My name is Gordon Schies and I live in Newington. I graduated from UCONN in 1987 with a degree in electrical engineering. I work for Alteris Renewables, Headquartered in Wilton, CT, as a Solar Energy Specialist. I'm responsible for residential photovoltaic (PV) solar site analysis and system design in Central and North central CT.

It's said a photo is worth a thousand words. My company holds an annual meeting during the first calendar quarter...our slow season every year. I've attached a couple photos to illustrate renewable energy job growth in just the past two years. The first photo shows our company of about 20 employees taken in March of 2008. I'm the person in the red shirt and I owe my job to the CT Clean Energy Fund. The second photo was taken a month ago on February 3rd, 2010.

The Alteris group photo taken a few weeks back shows most all of our current 131 employees. Half the employees shown in this photo – or about 65 people - were hired in just the past 18 months...jobs that didn't exist before. And, since this is such a new field, most all of these new hires are learning new skills. Alteris is just one company of many that are creating these new green collar jobs with the help of state and federal incentives.

Jodi Rell announced January 20, 2010 that CT will receive \$3.36 million in federal stimulus funds to help train and educate the state's green collar workforce. This money will be totally wasted without House Bill 5362. Without House Bill 5362 layoffs of existing workers will occur in CT...in fact, it's already started. The "company" Alteris will survive just fine as other states now have superior incentives such as MA, NJ and NY. It's the CT employees that are at risk as well as all those new ARRA funded green collar job graduates.

As you know, jobs are just part of the benefits to state incentives. Renewable energy improves our national security, our current account trade balance, our economic competitiveness, the air we breathe, and the climate we rely on. Renewable energy incentives widely distribute energy production and therefore reduce - or could even eliminate - the costs for adding new transmission lines and/or peak power plants here in CT.

Of course, every argument FOR renewable energy is an argument against the hidden costs of fossil fuels. Hidden costs such as air pollution and climate change. If the local supermarket started dumping their trash in your driveway you'd be up in arms. Yet, fossil fuel fired plants are allowed to spew their pollution into the atmosphere absolutely free of charge. And what about the cost of wars and terror attacks that are directly attributable to our addiction to fossil fuels? You must also be aware that fossil fuel companies receive their own incentives in the form of tax breaks, public land leases at below market rates, etc. etc. and so House Bill 5362 helps create a level playing field.

House Bill 5362...where else can the people of CT receive such a large return on their investment? I urge you to support and pass House Bill 5362.

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