

Testimony of Gayle Weinstein, First Selectman, Town of Weston
In Favor of
R.B. No. 5364 "An Act Concerning Virtual Net Metering"

I would like to thank the Committee on Energy and Technology for all of their efforts on behalf of Connecticut Residents. Both the Federal and State Governments have promoted the development and use of Class I Renewable Energy Sources and I applaud this Committee's push towards energy efficiency, conservation and clean technology programs for residents as well as municipalities.

I am here today to support Raised Bill No. 5264, "An Act Concerning Virtual Net Metering."

Weston is a small, rural town of approximately 10,000 residents. We have very little commercial base, and our community prides itself on all of our conservation efforts, including energy. To reduce our energy consumption and carbon footprint, we are looking to install a 400Kw Fuel Cell on our school campus. We have identified the Middle School as the most appropriate location, since the excess heat given off by the fuel cell could be utilized to heat the swimming pool in that building. The problem is, the fuel cell will create more energy than can be utilized at just that one school. Our initial thought was to tie the fuel cell into the adjacent High School, as well.

We asked the DPUC for a request to aggregate the 2 meters, which would obviate the need for the Town to spend over \$900,000 to connect the electrical service for the High School and Middle Schools together. Instead, the net metering would be accomplished by

a simple bookkeeping entry. This is a similar concept, albeit more complicated, to the legislation you are currently considering. The draft decision ruled in our favor; however both CL&P and UI have filed strong exceptions.

As you know, fuel cells and other forms of distributive generation cannot be tailored to specific energy usage; rather it is a one size fits all model. Raised Bill No. 5364, An Act Concerning Virtual Net Metering, would make our fuel cell project economically viable, allow us to support a Connecticut based manufacturing facility, reduce our carbon footprint, and support the intent of the Connecticut State legislature to “promote the efficient use of Connecticut’s land, energy and natural resources.”

Respectfully Submitted,
Gayle Weinstein
First Selectman
Town of Weston, CT

March 4, 2010