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Written Testimony of Christopher Phelps  
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Before the Connecticut General Assembly Finance Committee

Monday, March 1, 2010

**Supporting Senate Bill 1, An Act Concerning The Preservation And Creation Of Jobs In Connecticut.**

Senator Daily, Representative Staples, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of Environment Connecticut, I am submitting this testimony supporting SB1. Environment Connecticut is a statewide, member-supported non-profit environmental advocacy organization. One of our top priorities in 2010 is promotion of policies to create and retain jobs in Connecticut's clean energy economy. We applaud the committee for considering this job-focused legislation and offer the following additional policies for your consideration. These proposals would support job growth in clean energy and other sectors promoting a clean, healthy environment.

**Clean Energy Jobs:**

Authorize creation of bond-funded municipal clean energy and energy efficiency loan funds. Such a program, modeled on successful and innovative "Property Assessed Clean Energy" (PACE) initiatives in jurisdictions nationwide involves creation of revolving loan pools at the municipal and regional level. Such loan pools are funded through municipal bonding and used to offer low-interest loans to local homeowners and small businesses investing in clean energy systems and energy efficiency improvements.

Such programs provide the dual economic benefit of cutting energy bills for residential and business customers and promoting the creation and retention of local jobs in clean energy businesses.

**Agricultural Jobs:**

Establish a Farm Training & Infrastructure Match Program funded with a combined \$1.5 million in state bond funding and prioritizing programs eligible for federal matching funding. The program would provide grants supporting agriculture workforce training and capital investment benefiting Connecticut agricultural producers.

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Transit-Oriented Jobs:

Require the Department of Economic & Community Development and Connecticut Development Authority to prioritize granting of tax credits, business incentives, loans, etc., to businesses expanding operations and hiring employees at job sites located in proximity to existing bus and rail transit lines.

Clean Water Jobs:

Enable municipalities to create stormwater authorities to fund measures to reduce stormwater pollution and meet Clean Water Act obligations.

Support investment in sewage treatment plant and infrastructure upgrades. Such initiatives create and retain local jobs, reduce pollution flowing into the state's waterways and Long Island Sound, and can leverage available federal funds.

We urge the legislature to support legislative proposals such as these that can stimulate growth of jobs in business sectors that benefit both the state's environment and economy. Thank you again for the opportunity to offer this testimony and comments supporting Senate Bill 1.

Sincerely,

Christopher Phelps  
Program Director  
Environment Connecticut