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To: Honorable Senator John Fonfara
Honorable Representative Vickie Orsini Nardello
Energy and Technology Committee

From: Chuck Moran, Legislative Chair for the Connecticut Lodging Association

Date: February 3, 2011

Subject: Testimony for Public Hearing: Support of Raised Bill No. 6249

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony concerning Raised Bill No. 6249, An Act Establishing a Moratorium on the Siting of Wind Projects until the Adoption of Regulations.

The Connecticut Lodging Association strongly supports Raised Bill No. 6249, An Act Establishing a Moratorium on the Siting of Wind Projects until the Adoption of Regulations.

Given the nature of the lodging industry, the siting of wind turbines could have a significant negative effect on hotels, motels, inns and B&Bs. Leisure travelers select their destinations and accommodations for many reasons, particularly the location's ambience. Without thoughtful guidelines, wind turbines could be placed in locations that would adversely affect the tourism industry. While the classic windmills of the Netherlands add charm to the landscape and enhance the visitor experience, inappropriately placed wind turbines could make Connecticut less attractive as a destination. Regulations must be implemented to avoid the placement of wind turbines in areas that advance tourism. The state's natural beauty is one of the many assets that draws visitors, and residents, to the area. Before wind turbines are placed, the impact on the environment including all businesses and homes must be carefully considered.

Hoteliers share many of the placement concerns of homeowners in residential neighborhoods. The installation of a wind turbine in close proximity to their property potentially could result in reduced occupancy. As many in the lodging industry are small businesses, any further decrease in occupancy in this already struggling market could result in increased unemployment and foreclosures. The ripple effect would also impact local restaurants, retailers and other ancillary services.

Certainly, the Connecticut Lodging Association recognizes the need to implement clean energy solutions. It is imperative that guidelines are established to insure minimal disruption for lodging institutions and their guests. This bill would provide the time necessary to develop guidelines that would protect the environment, as well as the visitor experience.