

Written Testimony of Marianne Horn, Treasurer, Peoples Action for Clean Energy (PACE) before the

**Connecticut General Assembly Energy and Technology Committee,
March 15, 2011 concerning SENATE BILL 1, AN ACT CONCERNING
ENERGY POLICY AND FINANCE.**

Thank you for your consideration of my comments in favor of solar incentives to provide the industry stability that will help bring down costs.

I write this testimony against the unfolding tragedy in Japan where several "failsafe" nuclear reactors are in a state of catastrophic and unprecedented emergency, exposing Japan's citizens and the entire world to the risks of deadly radiation – now and for generations to come. Solar energy is clean, renewable and safe. If anything positive can come out of the devastation in Japan, let it be that Connecticut makes a commitment, starting with this legislation, to fully support the development of a sane and sustainable energy policy.

Solar energy works in Connecticut and it is good for jobs, our health, and for building our state's economy. Countries such as Germany and China are capitalizing on this new industry in creative and profitable ways. Connecticut needs to return to its own innovative, entrepreneurial roots and make every effort to support homegrown renewable energy over imported fossil fuels and nuclear energy.

Senate Bill 1 contains some positive provisions supporting this goal and I write to support the language creating improved consumer financing programs for energy efficiency and renewable energy and providing incentives for energy efficiency, combined heat and power and renewable energy. I also encourage the adoption of the provisions expanding the state DEP into a new Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

The Bill also includes provisions to bring solar power into the mainstream (sections 56-62). However, it appears to have been drafted with the intent to cut the amount of commercial solar in half. Solar industries are understandably reluctant to commit to a significant presence in Connecticut when incentives and programs change each year and are vulnerable to reductions or rescission with each new budget cycle. I urge the Committee to adopt language that will provide consistent and sufficient funding for solar incentives to provide the industry stability that will help bring down costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important legislation and for your consideration of my testimony.

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