



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE GEOFF LUXENBERG
12TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 4052
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591

CAPITOL: 860-240-8686
FAX: 860-240-0208
E-MAIL: Geoff.Luxenberg@cga.ct.gov

MEMBER
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE
GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS
COMMITTEE

Transportation Committee Public Hearing 2-14-11

Proposed H.B. No. 6127 An Act Promoting the Use of Fuel Cells in Vehicles.

Dear Chairman Guerrero, Chairman Maynard, Ranking Members Boucher and Scribner and distinguished members of the Transportation Committee,

I testify today in support of HB 6127 An Act Promoting the Use of Fuel Cells in Vehicles. This legislation is very simple in concept. If adopted, this legislation would amend the general statutes to require that at least one per cent of the state fleet of light duty passenger vehicles and one per cent of the transit bus fleet use fuel cells by 2015 and at least ten per cent of such fleets use fuel cells by 2025; and to exempt all fuel cell vehicle purchases from the state sales tax.

The purpose of these changes is to move the State of Connecticut to make a commitment to invest in fuel cell technology in accordance with recommendations made by a report that was released by the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology and the Department of Transportation. CCAT and CTDOT recommend the State of Connecticut move in the direction of transitioning our state fleet of vehicles to fuel cell powered vehicles for many reasons, but the most important impetus for this bill is to protect and create good paying high-tech jobs in our Connecticut.

Connecticut has eight fuel cell companies that employ thousands of people in our state, most notably United Technologies Corporation. UTC employs many people in my district in Manchester and across the state. Primarily, because of our entrepreneurial spirit, as well as our well-educated, scientific work-force and our geographic proximity to Boston and New York, Connecticut has emerged as a world leader in fuel cell technology. We are justly proud of this and this sense of pride and accomplishment will only increase, since this emerging industry shows great promise for transforming our environment, reducing our carbon footprint and creating quality jobs for the future.

With unemployment at 9 percent and many constituents concerned about the business climate in our state, the questions I am asked most frequently by my constituents are: what are you doing to create jobs? what are you doing to keep companies in Connecticut? what are you doing to make sure Connecticut's economy can flourish and compete with other states?

My answer is that Connecticut has to take advantage of natural advantages and maximize its economic strengths. In the Transportation Committee, I imagine there is often a discussion about how to maximize our State's strategic location between the two major economic engines of Boston and New York -- the New Haven to Springfield rail-line falls into that category. My own State Senator, Steve Cassano, has spoken eloquently about making sure we put Connecticut's "*ports in the right position to take advantage of our Panama Canal project.*" The fuel cell industry is Connecticut's "diamond in the rough". We are a world leader. We have the companies with the technology. We have the scientific work-force, but we don't have the state government incentives and commitments to protect, expand and capitalize on our natural strength.

6127 demonstrates to these companies and their Connecticut workers, that we will support their traditional work ethic, ground-breaking research and development efforts and improvements to our environment; as well as capitalize on the competitive advantage we have in an emerging industry.

I believe the immediate upfront costs to this legislation are negligible, and the benefits of putting the framework in place for state support of more efficient high tech vehicles will create and protect jobs and add to our state's revenue base over time.

I thank you for your indulgence and consideration of this legislation and am open to any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rep. Geoff Luxenberg
12th House District
Manchester, CT