

ENERGY COMMISSION

TOWN HALL
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, CT 06897

203-563-0100



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March 5,2013

Energy and Technology Committee
State of Connecticut
Public Hearing March 5, 2013
ET.testimony@cga.ct.gov

Dear members of the Energy and Technology Committee:

I am writing in support of S.B. 949 – An Act Establishing Commercial and Industrial Property Tax Exemptions for Clean Energy Projects.

The Wilton Energy Commission studied this program in depth and enthusiastically recommended that the Wilton Board of Selectmen, constituting the legislative body of the Town of Wilton, approve the C-Pace Agreement. They did so on February 19, 2013. This program directly enhances the ability of our Wilton Economic Development Commission to retain and attract businesses to Wilton. As you know Connecticut is at an economic disadvantage because of our high energy costs at a time when we need to expand our tax base not chase companies away.

The one weakness of this program is that currently Wilton would be required to charge the property owner property taxes on the energy improvements they make under C-PACE. This could negate the financial benefits to property owners. We want to encourage owners to make these improvements as it strengthen our town's financial status long-term and quickly improves the quality of Wilton's environment with reduced emissions. S.B. 949 gives the municipalities the right to issue exemptions by ordinance.

There is another reason to approve this legislation. Wilton is in negotiation with a Power Purchase Vendor for significant Solar Voltaic installations on a School and Municipal Building , in a program made possible by the DEEP ZREC program. The installation would be owned by a commercial firm and therefore Wilton would have to add the value to the Grand List and levy a property tax . That in turn would be charged back to Wilton in the utility bill nullifying the benefit of the Power Purchase Agreement or at least creating a questionable accounting ploy. This legislation would resolve this impediment.

Sincerely,

Bruce E Hampson
Chair, Wilton Energy Commission