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To the Co-chairs and members of the Energy and Technology Committee

Testimony regarding House Bill 1138 An Act Concerning Connecticut's Clean Energy Goals

Submitted by Elise J. Willer, Legislative Policy Organizer

Senator Duff, Representative Reed, and distinguished members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill 1138, An Act Concerning Connecticut's Clean Energy Goals.

My name is Elise Willer and I am testifying on behalf of Connecticut Working Families. An organization dedicated to the economic livelihoods of Connecticut working and middle class families.

As an organization that works and cares about union workers, minimum wage workers, and the unemployed (among other groups of workers) we understand the constant need for "jobs". Somewhere around 50,000 construction workers are unemployed at the moment, and everyone is working hard to return to Connecticut's pre-2008 unemployment levels. However, in the drive to create "jobs, jobs, jobs", it is easy to lose sight of the big picture, and even easier to be deceived into thinking that a specific policy change is going to create jobs or be "good for the economy" because that is what we desperately want to hear. In these instances, it is important to take a step back and take the time to truly evaluate those policy suggestions and the resulting job opportunities.

The Renewable Portfolio Standard Study Executive Summary was officially released yesterday and the actual study has only been released today. The technical meetings and public hearings aren't scheduled until April. In the *Notice of Comments, Tech Mtg, Hearing* document that was sent along with the Executive Summary it clearly states, "By Way of this Notice, DEEP will conduct a technical meeting to consider this matter fully". But how can the matter be considered fully if we are here today, already discussing legislation that stems from this study? By forcing the issue today we are cheating ourselves out of our own public, democratic process of creating legislation.

In addition, by rushing this process we risk unintentionally burdening Connecticut job seekers and taxpayers. In this case, language categorizing energy produced by Canadian



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Hydro as a Class 1 Renewable endangers future Connecticut-based clean energy projects. This will prevent local job creation and will send Connecticut dollars, not just out of state, but also out of country. Naturally, working towards job creation is a good think but we want jobs, first and foremost, here in Connecticut and we certainly don't want Connecticut tax dollars to fund job development in another country when there is so much here in Connecticut that we can do to lower energy prices, and create new jobs.

To avoid unintentional consequences of hurried and careless policy and out of respect for the democratic process, Working Families strongly opposes house bill 1138. We call on this committee to honor the public process identified by DEEP before acting on further changes to the Renewable Portfolio Standard. It is important that interested stakeholders who weren't a part of the writing process have the space to comment and most importantly it is vital that the Connecticut public be given an opportunity to speak out on its own clean energy goals.

Thank you.