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Martin Mador, Legislative Chair

Energy and Technology Committee  
March 19, 2013

Testimony on  
SB 1138 AAC Connecticut's Clean Energy Goals (LCO 4767)

I am Martin Mador, 130 Highland Ave., Hamden, CT 06518. I am the volunteer Legislative Chair for the Connecticut Chapter of the Sierra Club. I hold a Masters of Environmental Management degree from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

We offer these specific comments on language in SB 1138 to modify the state's RPS. The Sierra Club is very concerned about the process and timing involved in bringing this bill to public hearing. We note that DEEP's RPS study will not be finished until May 13.

Sections of this bill are highly appropriate and fully supported by us. Others, however, we must vigorously oppose.

**Section 1**  
**Methane (line 6)**

The deletion of the words "from landfills" may allow methane from any source to qualify as Class I. The use of the word "biogas" may rectify this. In addition, anaerobic digestion should be included by name.

**Small Hydro (lines 8-12)**

The Low Impact Hydropower Institute certification has formerly been a reliable indicator of environmentally safe design. However, in recent years, it has not maintained its mission, and we are concerned about using this as the sole standard to qualify projects. Run of the river should be retained, and the addition of LIHI be dropped.

**Double Dipping (lines 23-27)**

The purpose of the RPS is to encourage development of renewable energy sources. Allowing a single source to generate recs more than once defeats that purpose. Sierra supports inclusion of this language.

**Biomass (lines 13-17, 56-103)**

"Sustainable fuel" is not sufficiently defined, and therefore does not meet the standards established by current science to maintain forest health or limit the CO<sub>2</sub> impacts from the biomass sector. The changes do not address stack emissions of lifecycle accounting of CO<sub>2</sub>, other than for transport of fuels. Accounting for only CO<sub>2</sub> transport impacts of biomass ignores the significant contribution to climate change from biomass combustion.

Excluding Construction and Demolition waste as qualifying feedstock is appropriate.

The effort to increase the NOx and PM standards is laudable but falls well below known achievable standards for any new facility

We encourage a standard like that established in MA, NY, MD, and especially CA are significantly ahead of where CT proposes to be with modifying biomass eligibility. We recommend investigating programs in those states to find a preferred model for CT for biomass.

### **Large Hydro (lines 28-39)**

This language is obviously aimed at including energy from Quebec and other large hydro as a Class I resource. The environmental consequences of large hydro need to be recognized. Creating a new dammed reservoir causes loss of land, and, for some projects, destruction of human habitation and the dislocation of populations. The decomposition of submerged land generates climate change gases for many years. Destruction of marine habitat is extensive.

We are exceptionally displeased both that this is included, and that it is identified in such an obscure way. The Sierra Club advises unconditionally that this section and any reference in the bill to "Class I contracted tier" be dropped.

### **Section 2 (lines 40-55)**

Sierra supports omitting programs based on ratepayer or RGGI funding from eligibility.

### **Section 4**

#### **RPS Class I Numerical Goals**

Sierra supports the changes here, except that inclusion in any form, of the Class I contracted Tier is unacceptable.

### **Section 5**

Using long term contracts to provide renewable energy is a Sierra priority. We support this section, but are concerned that the cap may be too low or even unnecessary.

### **Trash to Energy Plants**

Sierra is pleased that this bill does not elevate Trash to Energy plants to Class I. Awarding Class I recs here would seriously weaken the use of Class I to encourage genuinely beneficial renewable energy sources.