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TESTIMONY

RENEWABLE ENERGY AND EFFICIENCY BUSINESS ASSOCIATION, INC.

RAISED BILL NO. 353, AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEVELOPMENT OF CLASS I RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCE PROJECTS

March 4, 2014

Good morning Senator Duff, Representative Reed, Senator Chapin, Representative Hoydick, and members of the Energy & Technology Committee. My name is Paul Michaud and I am the Executive Director the Renewable Energy and Efficiency Business Association, Inc. (“REEBA”). With over 70 members, REEBA is a Connecticut business trade association that focuses on promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency in Connecticut. On behalf of REEBA, I thank you for the opportunity to offer my comments on Raised Bill No. 353.

REEBA strongly supports Raised Bill No. 353 for the following three reasons:

First, the bill promotes the development of renewable energy projects within Connecticut and for the benefit of Connecticut. The bill mandates that any projects selected for a contract must first show that they can provide Connecticut with: (1) air quality benefits; (2) economic develop benefits; (3) fuel diversity benefits; (4) energy independence benefits; (5) power reliability benefits; and/or (6) electricity price stability benefits. These are clean energy benefits only renewable energy projects located “in-state” can provide. The raised Bill ensures that Connecticut’s investment in clean renewable energy stays in the state and that the benefits of clean renewable energy belong to Connecticut.

Second, the bill promotes renewable energy systems in a size range that is optimal for renewable energy in the Connecticut market and is not currently served by any existing state programs. Connecticut currently has the ZREC program that funds projects under 1 MW. The state also has several RFPs for out-of-state wind and hydro-power projects that exceed 20 MWs. Both of these programs miss the “sweet spot” for renewable energy in Connecticut, which is the 1 MW to 20 MW size range. This size range would allow Connecticut the opportunity to procure larger, but not too large, renewable energy projects that will sell power close to grid parity and at the same time allow the benefits of clean renewable energy to stay in the state.

Third, the bill promotes the development of clean renewable energy projects on otherwise unproductive industrial brownfields and closed landfills. The state has hundreds of contaminated tracts of land and closed landfills called brownfields. A strong benefit of renewable energy projects, such as solar arrays, is that they can be used as an engineered control technique to contain the contamination within these brownfield sites. The Raised Bill provides Connecticut the opportunity convert its brownfields into “bright fields” that will produce clean renewable energy while keeping the benefits of clean renewable energy in the state.

On behalf of REEBA’s members, I thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Raised Bill No. 358, and I am available for any questions.