



Connecticut Chapter
2074 Park St.
Hartford, Connecticut 06105
www.connecticut.sierraclub.org
Martin Mador, Legislative Chair

Energy and Technology Committee
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Testimony In Support of
HB 5412 AAC Shared Clean Energy Facilities

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.

Expansion of clean energy is a priority of Connecticut's energy policy for the future. We have implemented this in a variety of ways: encouraging and supporting renewable energy installations for residences and businesses, programs which provide long term financing which make these installs cash positive for the property owner, long term leases for major production facilities in Connecticut and across the northeast; virtual net metering for several facilities with a common owner.

But we have not yet provided tools for multiple owners to share the costs, operation, and benefits of a renewable energy facility. HB 5412 does that. It will allow owners not able to provide generation on their own to commission a shared facility.

I rarely make my testimony to the CGA personal, but I will here. I am precluded from installing solar array on my property in Hamden because of my neighbor's trees. I installed solar hot water on my previous residence in 1981. I have long regretted the lack of opportunity to do this where I now live. So I look forward to establishing a Highland Ave. association to install Class I solar for the benefit of many homeowners on the street.

I am concerned that the requirements for establishing a "subscriber organization" in this context be as simple as possible. I would like any obligation incurred for establishment of the facility to run with the land, not the property owner, as a PACE program provides.

Does HB 5412 contain sufficient legal guidance here, or should an entity such as CEFIA be directed to establish a robust set of rules?

The concept of shared renewable energy installations is critically important. HB 5412 is a very significant bill, which the Sierra Club fully endorses.