



**Testimony of Renewable Energy New England, Inc. before the  
Energy and Technology Committee on**

**Raised Bill 353**

***An Act Concerning the Development of Class I Renewable Energy Source Projects***

**March 4, 2014**

Senator Duff, Representative Reed, Senator Chapin, Representative Hoydick and members of the Energy and Technology Committee, my name is Francis Pullaro and I'm here on behalf of Renewable Energy New England, Inc. ("RENEW"), its Executive Director, to testify in support of Raised Bill 353, *An Act Concerning the Development of Class I Renewable Energy Source Projects*, which establishes a program for the procurement of renewable energy from mid-sized facilities, described in the bill as projects of 1 to 20 MW in size, with a preference for projects located on brownfield sites.<sup>1</sup>

RENEW is a partnership between the renewable energy industry and environmental public interest groups in New England whose mission involves promoting clean, renewable and environmentally responsible technologies for the region that will increase energy diversity, spur economic development, and improve environmental quality.

Thousands of examples exist of renewable energy projects sited on farms, forests and mountain tops that help meet open space goals or help support farmers financially all while delivering the many benefits of clean energy. Siting a renewable energy project on a brownfield site can promote a different set of benefits by making a formerly productive site, now poorly suited for commercial or residential redevelopment due to environmental hazards and costs, safer and once again a contributor to the local economy and tax base. A preference for siting renewable energy facilities on brownfields can place brownfield projects on equal footing with greenfield projects by allowing DEEP to assess the embedded cost to the developer for any environmental clean-up as another benefit rather than penalize it for its including the cost in its bid. Any extra revenue for the project can help cover not only clean-up costs but help offset costs

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<sup>1</sup> The comments expressed herein represent the views of RENEW and not necessarily those of any particular member of RENEW.

of long-term operation, maintenance and oversight of contamination. For this reason, RENEW supports giving the DEEP the authority to exercise a small amount of discretion in favoring projects for brownfields redevelopment.

The state benefits from having renewable energy projects of varying size including the “mid-size” projects (1 to 20 MW) provided for in this bill. Diversification of energy projects can, like the goals of the micro-grid program, increase electric system reliability and enhance infrastructure resilience. Creating procurement opportunities for projects of this size fills the void between two key programs for Class I renewable energy resources: the 1 MW ZREC cap and the 20 MW floor under Section 6 of Public Act 13-303. In reviewing the submissions to last year’s Section 6 solicitation, RENEW observes a cluster of proposals for projects to be located in Connecticut in the 20 – 30 MW range. Rather than base the mid-size project cap on the floor of Section 6 solicitation, RENEW suggests it be raised to 30 MW to capture the more natural definition of a mid-size project reflected in the current state of the market. Many of these projects will excel at meeting some of the newly established non-price criteria in the bill- particularly economic development, energy independence, and improved power reliability- yet find it difficult to compete in the solicitation against the large projects where the price criterion can have a much heavier weighting. Allowing DEEP to consider a wider-range of projects against the criteria established in this bill will ensure it has the ability to select a stronger portfolio of projects.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

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