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Martin Mador, Legislative Chair

Planning and Development Committee
March 14, 2014

Testimony In Opposition to
SB 404 AAC Building Permit Fees for Class I Renewable Energy Projects and Renewable Energy Credits for Trash-to-Energy Facilities, Section 2

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.

Section 2 of SB 404 provides a subsidy for trash to energy (TTE) incineration plants through the renewable energy RPS program. The Sierra Club has consistently opposed similar proposals. The RPS was created to encourage creation of new, genuine, renewable energy sources such as wind and solar. Trash incineration in no way qualifies, regardless of the level of the RECs awarded. Using Connecticut's renewable energy program to underwrite TTE programs is not beneficial public policy.

The TTE plants have had a hard time lately competing against natural gas energy generation in the energy markets. So they are looking for ways of making their operations economically profitable. Corrupting our renewable energy programs is simply not the way to do this.

Additionally, the state is looking for ways of moving beyond TTE, a 40 year old policy which is now regarded as obsolete. SB 404 would work in opposition to those efforts, which include SB 27 under consideration this year. We now recognize that reducing the volume of solid waste we have to process through "reduce, reuse, recycle" must be our chosen strategy. Continuing to support and grow TTE cannot be.

The Sierra Club strongly recommends against SB 404, Section 2.

However, we endorse Section 1, which would encourage construction of Class I renewable energy projects.