



Connecticut Chapter
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Martin Mador, Legislative Chair

Energy and Technology Committee
February 24, 2015

Testimony In Support of
HB 6023 An Act Concerning Distributed Generation
SB 570 An Act Concerning Electric Savings and Fixed Bill Fees

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.

The Hamden Energy Use and Climate Change Commission, of which I am a member, has voted unanimously to endorse both SB 570 and HB 6023.

HB 6023 embodies a critically important concept, and so is an important bill to pass. We now understand that our energy future must incorporate two changes from the way we do business today.

We must move as rapidly as possible from reliance on fossil fuels to energy from renewable sources, or at least to much cleaner sources. We must do this to reduce the pollution load. For future generations, we must do this to address the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

We must reduce our exclusive reliance on the grid, and provide for local energy generation. This will help ensure reliability of electrical power to the consumer. It will reduce the need for additional transmission capacity. It will reduce the need for additional large generation plants, fueled by fossil fuels or nuclear power.

Distributed generation of renewable power will generate jobs. Local jobs which must be filled by American workers. So this serves as well a boost to the national economy.

We do not understand today all of the benefits renewable distributed generation can provide. Without knowing its full value, we cannot accurately price it, and appropriately compensate those who would provide this energy. The study called for by HB 6023 should provide the answers. We know other states are looking at this issue as well, so we will profit from their efforts.

Over the past four years, we have invested in building energy expertise in the state, expertise that we had eschewed for a very long time. We now need to put that expertise to work.

The Sierra Club advises that passing HB 6023 is an important and necessary step to inform the future energy policy for Connecticut.

The case for passing **SB 570** is quite simple. While promoting renewable energy is important, equally significant is encouraging consumers to use less of it. Promoting financial incentives to encourage people to do the right thing is one of the fundamentals of environmental advocacy policy. And energy conservation is certain the right thing.

A high fixed fee for providing electrical service is destructive. The message here is that use as much or as little as you like, you will pay the same amount. So there is no incentive to do the right thing. We must structure electricity pricing so that the final cost to the consumer is proportional to the amount used.

We note that SB 574, HB 5281, HB 5402, HB 6014, and HB 6029, all on today's agenda, also call for placing a cap on the fixed portion of the electric bill. We support all of them, but have chosen to focus on SB 570.

Placing a cap on the fixed portion of the bill, as SB 570 provides, is the way to do this. The Sierra Club strongly endorses this.