



March 17, 2015

**State of Connecticut General Assembly  
Joint Committee on Energy and Technology**

**Written Testimony of Clean Energy Collective, LLC**

**RE: SB 928 - Shared Clean Energy (RECOMMEND SUPPORT)  
and  
HB 6940 – Shared Clean Energy Pilot Program**

Energy and Technology Committee Members:

Clean Energy Collective is pleased to have the opportunity to testify in strong support of Senate Bill 928, the Act Concerning Shared Clean Energy Facilities. Clean Energy Collective (CEC) is the nation's leading developer of community shared solar solutions, and can directly testify to the importance of strong, well-designed enabling policy. We have over 90 projects, representing over 100 megawatts of capacity, built or under development in 8 states and have seen firsthand the positive impacts they have in their community.

***Shared Clean Energy will strengthen job growth, local economic development***

CEC is investing hundreds of millions of dollars in shared clean energy projects in Massachusetts, and we are prepared to invest at least \$100 million in Connecticut should legislation pass to unlock the market.

Clean energy is a competitive, rapidly growing industry, with high-paying jobs for all education levels. There are now over 173,000 Americans employed in the solar industry nationwide, more than auto manufacturing or coal mining, two of our traditional American industries. Clean energy is the future, and Connecticut needs to take action to remain competitive. At 1,600 jobs, Connecticut is currently ranked 25<sup>th</sup> out of the 50 states in solar jobs. It's time to take the next step, and that is opening the market to shared clean energy.

***SB 928 reflects national best practices and follows recommendations of CT's CASE experts***

Based on CEC's experience developing projects with communities and utilities in 8 states, we can say that SB 928 creates a framework for an effective shared clean energy program that will benefit all involved.

Senate Bill 928 is based on the Interstate Renewable Energy Council's Model Rules for Shared Renewable Energy Programs, nationally regarded as best practice, and is tailored to Connecticut's market and regulatory environment.

Last year, this Committee requested that the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering (CASE) complete a study of shared clean energy programs and policies and make

recommendations for Connecticut to be considered in this legislative session. CASE worked with a committee of 15 national energy experts, and sought input from other states, the federal government, and stakeholders across the country. CASE completed their study last month, and SB 928 closely follows the recommendations contained in that study.

***Connecticut is ready for Shared Clean Energy***

Shared clean energy allows anyone, regardless of whether or not they can put solar panels on their roof, to directly benefit from clean energy generation. It gives customers an opportunity to stabilize and lower their energy costs. Without a statewide shared clean energy program, most customers will not have that opportunity to take more control of their energy costs.

Shared clean energy is working across the country. Ten states, including all of the other New England states, have enacted some form of shared clean energy program. You have the benefit here of being able to learn from their experience. Shared clean energy has been piloted, it has been proven, and the time is now ripe to give Connecticut energy customers the same access to clean energy and bill savings as is available in neighboring states.

We note that this Committee is also considering HB 6940, which would establish a two-project pilot for shared clean energy facilities. We understand the desire to learn from an initial round of projects and adjust program rules accordingly. However, we are confident that can be accomplished within the framework of SB 928 and without artificially constraining the market for the next three years. By 2019, which is the year in which HB 6940 calls for an evaluation of the two-project pilot, Connecticut would have fallen far behind in this competitive transition to clean energy infrastructure.

**We encourage the Committee to lay aside HB 6940 and instead focus on the prudent and meaningful policy approach put forth in SB 928.**

We thank you again for the opportunity to speak before you today, and encourage your full support of Senate Bill 928 and look forward to doing business in Connecticut.

Respectfully submitted by,



Jeffrey S. Lord  
Vice President of Project Development  
164 Christian Hill Road  
Higganum, CT 06441  
Jeff.Lord@easycleanenergy.com