



Renewable Energy and Efficiency Business Association, Inc. c/o Murtha Cullina LLP | CityPlace I | 185 Asylum Street | Hartford, CT 06103 | 860-240-6131

TESTIMONY OF
THE RENEWABLE ENERGY AND EFFICIENCY BUSINESS ASSOCIATION, INC.
ON S.B. NO. 224, S.B. NO. 272, H.B. NO. 5242, H.B. NO. 5309 AND H.B. NO.5427
March 1, 2016

Good afternoon Senator Doyle, Representative Reed, Senator Formica and Representative Ackert and members of the Energy & Technology Committee. My name is Paul Michaud and I am the Executive Director the Renewable Energy and Efficiency Business Association, Inc. (“REEBA”). With over 60 members, REEBA is a Connecticut business trade association that promotes renewable energy and energy efficiency in Connecticut. On behalf of REEBA, I thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on S.B. 224, S.B. 272, H.B. 5242, H.B. 5309 and H.B. 5427.

S.B. No. 224: AN ACT CONCERNING THE CAPACITY AND CRITERIA FOR CERTAIN RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION FACILITIES

REEBA generally supports this bill, but believes that the provision allowing the local distribution utilities to own renewable “generation” is inconsistent with the legislature’s 1998 goal of electric industry restructuring and separating rate-based generation from utility electric distribution operations. REEBA, however, in no way opposes the local electric distribution utilities forming competitive affiliates that could compete in the renewable generation space on a level playing field with the renewable energy companies.

S.B. No. 272: AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF MICROGRID GRANTS AND LOANS FOR CERTAIN DISTRIBUTED ENERGY GENERATION

REEBA supports the use of microgrid grants and loans to help fund the generation component of microgrids. Currently, state funding can only be used to fund the design, engineering services and interconnection infrastructure. This bill calls for matching funds or low interest loans for Class I and Class III renewable energy generating projects, gas micro-turbines and energy storage systems. REEBA believes that helping to fund both the interconnection and generation infrastructure of microgrids makes good sense and is in the public interest.

H.B. No. 5242: AN ACT CONCERNING AGRICULTURAL VIRTUAL NET METERING

REEBA supports this bill. It modifies the definition of “Agricultural Customer Host” to allow the owner of farmland to lease or enter into a long-term contract for an agricultural virtual net metering project. The benefit of this bill is that it puts farmers on a level playing field regarding the development of renewable energy projects as municipalities and the state.

H.B. No. 5309: AN ACT CONCERNING FACILITATION OF THE MUNICIPAL RESIDENTIAL SOLAR APPLICATION PROCESS

REEBA strongly supports the ongoing discussions aimed at improving the residential solar permitting process. Most residential rooftop solar projects have a capacity rating of twelve kilowatts or less and are basic “cookie cutter” installations. Thus, a standardized permitting process will not only reduce soft costs for the solar installers, but will also increase permitting efficiencies for local building officials. REEBA and other stakeholders have worked diligently since the end of the 2015 legislative session to improve the efficiency of the solar installation permitting process statewide. REEBA looks forward to continuing these discussions with the state building inspectors, local building inspectors, The Council of Small Towns (COST) and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) on this important issue.

H.B. No. 5427: AN ACT CONCERNING THE SHARED CLEAN ENERGY FACILITY PILOT PROGRAM

REEBA supports this bill, which will make important changes to the program in connection with utility cost recovery, tariff mechanisms, and other technical changes. Regarding the proposed 15-year financing mechanism, REEBA believes that this is too short. A 20-year financing mechanism is much more in line with industry financing and is consistent with other long-term renewable contracts supported by this legislature.

On behalf of all of the REEBA’s members, I thank the Energy and Technology Committee for their consideration.

Kind regards,



Paul R. Michaud, Esq.
Executive Director