



SIERRA CLUB

March 17th, 2017

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

To: Chair Reed, Lonnie.reed@cga.ct.gov
Co-Chair Formica, paul.formica@cga.ct.gov
Co-Chair Winfield, gary.winfield@cga.ct.gov
Energy and Technology Committee, ETtestimony@cga.ct.gov

RE: Testimony of the Sierra Club to the Connecticut Legislature's Energy and Technology Committee on S.B. 106, published as LCO No. 5352

Dear Chair Reed, Co-Chair Formica, Co-Chair Winfield, Members of the Energy and Technology Committee,

On behalf of the Sierra Club and its more than 36,000 members and supporters in Connecticut, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding the bills under consideration by the Committee. **We provide below specific comments in opposition to S.B. 106, *An Act Concerning Zero-Carbon Electric Generating Facilities and Achieving Connecticut's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mandated Levels, unless it is modified.*** Increasing clean energy and reducing carbon pollution is a vital strategy to meet Connecticut's commitments to help avoid the worst impacts of climate disruption, as codified in the Global Warming Solutions Act ("GWSA").

As we testified for the February 7th hearing, Connecticut's renewable energy requirements are effective, successful and popular.¹ As the Sierra Club emphasized on March 7th, any legislation to improve the Renewable Portfolio Standard ("RPS") must include both strengthening and extending those effective and necessary requirements, which will result in lower wholesale energy costs for families and businesses.² We therefore appreciate the Committee's inclusion in S.B. 106 of an extension of the RPS through 2040. Unfortunately the annual increase of 1% is not sufficient to achieve the levels of clean electricity identified as necessary to keep the state on track to reach GWSA targets by analysis from the Governor's Council on Climate Change ("GC3"), or to maintain Connecticut's clean energy leadership role compared to peer states in the region and the United States. Rhode Island accelerated their program to 1.5% annual increases last year, and the Massachusetts legislature is presently considering bills to reach 2-3% annual increases each year.

¹ [https://www.cga.ct.gov/2017/ctdata/tmy/2017SB-00630-R000207-](https://www.cga.ct.gov/2017/ctdata/tmy/2017SB-00630-R000207-Kresowik,%20Mark,%20Eastern%20Region%20Deputy%20Director-Sierra%20Club-TMY.PDF)

[Kresowik,%20Mark,%20Eastern%20Region%20Deputy%20Director-Sierra%20Club-TMY.PDF](https://www.cga.ct.gov/2017/ctdata/tmy/2017SB-00630-R000207-Kresowik,%20Mark,%20Eastern%20Region%20Deputy%20Director-Sierra%20Club-TMY.PDF)

² <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2017/ctdata/tmy/2017HB-07104-R000307-Sierra%20Club-TMY.PDF>

While we will certainly support legislation to improve the RPS, the Legislature should include new targets for the state's RPS of at least 35% Class I renewable energy sources by 2025; at least 50% Class 1 Renewable Energy Sources by 2030; and at least 80% from Class 1 Renewable Energy Sources by 2040 in any bill related to the program.

More troubling is the inclusion of language in S.B. 106 that would undermine many of the benefits that critical ramp up in clean energy would deliver – lower wholesale power prices and more jobs in the region – by forcing families and businesses to pay higher prices for dirty, dangerous, and unreliable energy sources. While reducing carbon pollution and providing clean energy is of paramount importance for the state, allowing contracts for an outdated and unreliable nuclear plant is a risky and unaffordable proposal. Contracts for existing trash incinerators would be even more damaging to the state's ostensible goals of reducing pollution. Contracts for resources already competing in electricity markets that have no plans to retire would only have the effect of raising retail electricity rates: no new jobs would be created or pollution reduced, only jobs lost due to higher prices for customers. In other words there are only costs from such a proposal, no benefits. **The Committee should remove the authority for contracting with existing facilities from S.B. 106, focusing resources on supporting deployment of new wind and solar projects in Connecticut and New England.**

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,



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