



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

## TESTIMONY

### RENEWABLE ENERGY AND EFFICIENCY BUSINESS ASSOCIATION, INC.

February 7, 2017

Good afternoon Senator Winfield, Representative Reed, Senator Formica and Representative Hoydick, 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 based business association that promotes renewable energy and energy efficiency in the state. Although the proposed bills are mostly in the concept stage, and the devil will be in the details, I thank you for the opportunity to offer comments today on these concept bills.

#### **S.B. No. 106: AN ACT CONCERNING ZERO-CARBON ELECTRIC GENERATING FACILITIES AND ACHIEVING CONNECTICUT'S GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS MANDATED LEVELS.**

REEBA does not support S.B. 106. Connecticut already has the disadvantage of having the highest electric rates in the continental United States. Providing a mechanism for nuclear to sell power directly to the electric utilities will drive electricity prices above the average marketplace costs and place an additional \$275 million annual burden on the state's economy. A price increase for nuclear energy (above market rates) seems wholly unnecessary in light of the fact that the cost of the states only operating nuclear power plant has already been paid in full.

#### **S.B. No. 412: AN ACT RESTRICTING THE USE OF INCENTIVES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOLAR ARRAYS ON AGRICULTURAL LAND.**

REEBA does not support S.B. 412, which would restrict solar of agricultural land. It has been REEBA's experience that most farm owners embrace solar farming as way to supplement their income and allow their traditional farming operations to continue. It is also REEBA's experience that solar arrays actually preserve the farmland (usually for about 20 years) and allow the farmland to be easily placed into agricultural service after the useful life of the solar arrays are completed, thus preserving the farmland for future generations. Compare this use to a residential housing development on farmland where the farmland is permanently destroyed. REEBA strongly believes that, at the end of the day, the land rights of individual farmers should be respected. If a farmer wishes to supplement his farm income by allowing a solar array on a portion of his land, he or she should be allowed to do so. Finally, we think it is premature to take any action restricting the use of farmland for solar arrays before DEEP develops the Green Plan as contemplated by H.B. 6547.

**S.B. No. 630: AN ACT CONCERNING CLEAN AND RENEWABLE ENERGY OPPORTUNITIES AND USE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES.**

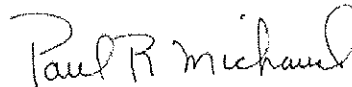
REEBA supports S.B. 630. Increasing the renewable portfolio standard and improving incentives for renewable energy sources is a good thing. REEBA anxiously awaits more details on this bill.

**H.B. No. 6547: AN ACT CONCERNING A CONNECTICUT GREEN PLAN AND RESOURCE USE INVENTORY FOR ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE.**

REEBA supports H.B. 6547. We believe that requiring DEEP to develop a Connecticut Green Plan and Resource Use Inventory for Energy Infrastructure to determine the best practices for the placement of energy infrastructure in the state is an intelligent approach. We recommend that any Green Plan developed by DEEP be incorporated in the state's Comprehensive Energy Strategy. We request that REEBA and other stakeholder organizations be allowed to participate in any working groups charged with developing the Connecticut Green Plan.

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

Kind regards,



Paul R. Michaud  
Executive Director