

Testimony before the Connecticut General Assembly's
Energy & Technology Committee
on
Proposed Senate Bill 106, *An Act Concerning Zero-Carbon Generating Facilities
and Achieving Connecticut's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mandated Levels*

By
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Good afternoon committee members. I am President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut. I would like to start by thanking all of you for your public service. I also want to thank you for providing the opportunity to speak on a very important matter, Senate Bill 106.

An Act Concerning Zero-Carbon Generating Facilities and Achieving Connecticut's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mandated Levels.

The Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut is a collaborative of business and community leaders dedicated to securing and enhancing the economic vitality of eastern Connecticut. The Chamber works to create value for its members and the region by providing forums for business networking, leadership and discussions of issues that affect the region; providing opportunities for members to showcase their products, services and accomplishments; helping small businesses succeed through educational programs; and working to reduce the costs of doing business in Connecticut. It is for these reasons that I ask that you support Senate Bill 106.

As a representative of approximately 1,600 companies and organizations in eastern Connecticut, I want you to know that we care deeply about the cost of electricity. First, SB 106 is consumer friendly energy BIL.

Connecticut has pursued multiple competitive processes to serve retail consumers directly. However, to date, these solicitations have been limited in scope. They have only allowed Natural Gas, Large-Scale Hydro and Class I Renewable resources the ability to compete. This does not make sense. If Connecticut wants the lowest energy cost, that also meets the state's environmental and economic goals, the present solicitation process has to be expanded. Broadening the solicitation list to include nuclear power, among others, will encourage more competition and lower costs.

Furthermore, it is important to note that SB 106 is not a state or rate payer subsidy. Instead, it establishes a competitive process to derive low cost retail electricity. Moreover, the legislative language mandates that the overseers of the solicitation process, the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP), the Attorney General's Office, the Office of the Consumer Counsel and the Public Utility Regulatory Authority (PURA) could only proceed with selecting a winning bid if it was determined to be in the ratepayers' interest. This is smart policy and good consumer protection. In essence the legislation is a tool to try and get more cost effective electricity on the Connecticut market. However, if the state regulators do not think that is being accomplished, the state is not mandated to act.

Adding additional resources to compete, like nuclear power, should help reduce costs. On a personal note, I hope Dominion's Millstone Power Station competes hard and wins. As you well know Connecticut is perceived to be a high cost state to do business in. A more competitive energy environment, something SB 106 is designed to encourage, will help stabilize energy costs for the consumer. If this legislation is passed and Dominion is the selected bidder, Connecticut will enjoy all of Millstone's carbon-free attributes and the economic impacts that the station brings too. Millstone is an important economic entity producing over \$1.5 billion in annual economic benefits for Connecticut. I fail to see why we would not want support SB 106 and allow for the opportunity for another supplier to enter the market. By supporting this bill everyone wins. I ask that you give serious consideration to supporting SB 106. Doing so allows a win / win for all parties.

Thank you.