



TOWN OF HAMDEN ENERGY USE & CLIMATE CHANGE COMMISSION

**Environment Committee
March 15, 2018**

HB 5363 An Act Establishing a Carbon Price for Fossil Fuels Sold in Connecticut

I am Martin Mador, 130 Highland Ave. Hamden, CT. I have a Masters in Environmental Management from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. I have served as the legislative and political chair for the Sierra Club in the state for a decade, and have submitted testimony on 400 bills. This testimony is submitted in my role as Chair of the Hamden Energy Use and Climate Change Commission. The commission, created by town ordinance in 2005, has voted to endorse the following.

We know without doubt that global warming/climate change is caused by the release of excess carbon to the atmosphere. Science teaches us that. Our efforts to minimize the threat centers on: simultaneously 1) switching as rapidly as possible to renewable energy, 2) promoting energy efficiency in many ways, and 3) minimizing the burning of all fossil fuels. We need to focus on the fossil fuel threat and find ways to minimize coal, fuel oil, natural gas. This is a difficult challenge because a measurable fraction of our economy is based on fossil fuels. And, of course, we have to contend with our unofficial state motto, "The land of Steady Habits".

HB 5363 will draw our attention more strongly to the use of fossil fuels. The bill as written does impose a "tax" on sale of these fuels, but, as written, it actually returns the money to us. So it serves as a good way to start the conversations about the significance of the issue. Prohibiting fossil use would not be a viable solution because of the disruption it would cause, but bringing attention to it is good public policy. Doing so will grow our determination to do what is necessary to preserve the planet for generations yet to come.

However the bill would be substantially improved if we give consideration to distribution of the money collected. Use it to reduce pollution and the consequences of fossil fuels. Perhaps provide rebates only to those low income residents and those most impacted by the reliance on fossil fuels. Use a portion of the funds for renewable energy and energy efficiency programs targeting low income communities.