

Testimony Before the Committee on Energy & Technology

Concerning

S.B. No. 9 AN ACT CONCERNING CONNECTICUT'S ENERGY FUTURE

Submitted by Royal Graves
February 27, 2018

Dear Members of the Energy and Technology Committee:

I am submitting this testimony concerning Proposed S.B. No. 9, An Act Concerning Connecticut's Energy Future.

I support the provision in this bill that would require Connecticut to update and extend its Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS), but I strongly oppose the provision that would eliminate net metering for residential solar customers.

Renewable Portfolio Standard

I urge the committee to support an expansion of the RPS to at least 40% by 2030.

- Connecticut has made strong commitments to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to combat climate change, achieving those goals will require a transition to a clean energy economy that relies primarily on electricity generated from renewable sources.
- Compliance with a higher RPS will also reduce emissions of harmful pollutants like nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, and mercury, and provide substantial health benefits for Connecticut residents.
- Connecticut's RPS currently does not set any increase in standards beyond 2020, and the 2020 standard is not as aggressive as that of neighboring states, including New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont.
- The RPS is also good for Connecticut's economic growth. The RPS helps drive investments in renewables by guaranteeing that there is a market for that energy and by helping those renewables become more competitive with fossil fuel-based energy that currently has a market advantage. This will help increase the 37,000 energy efficiency and solar jobs (US. Dept. of Energy Jan. 2017 report) in Connecticut.
- The proposed expansion of the RPS to 40% by 2030 is the minimum required to meet the emissions reduction goal recommended by the Governor's Council on Climate Change. An RPS of 45% (or even 50%) would do much more to promote clean energy, create jobs, and improve health by reducing pollution.

Net Metering

I strongly oppose the proposed elimination of net metering for residential solar customers, and I urge the committee to reject this aspect of SB 9. Elimination of net metering for residential solar customers would:

- Restrict consumers from using the energy generated on their own rooftops requiring them to sell it back to the utility.

- Prevent customers from storing energy. This would have the effect of greatly slowing electric automobile use and expansion in Connecticut.
- End the development of a clean, efficient, cost-effective grid. Distributed solar and energy storage are key pieces to the modern grid. Limiting this transition will keep energy costs high and restrict consumers choice and control. (And will likely make Connecticut a loser in attracting advanced technology companies and people to help the state grow.)
- Require two utility meters, one to measure generated power and another to measure consumed electricity. This will increase the metering and billing costs for both the utility and customers.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony concerning SB 9, which would strengthen Connecticut's Renewable Portfolio Standard and thereby help to meet our state's climate goals while fostering local job creation and improvements in public health.

Respectfully submitted,

Royal Graves
21 Prospect Street
Wethersfield, CT 06109-3756