



February 28, 2018

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

To: Co-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. 9, published as LCO No. 340

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

On behalf of the Sierra Club and our 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 for the public hearing on March 1st, 2018. Increasing efficiency, clean energy, and reducing carbon pollution are vital strategies to create jobs, grow the economy, improve public health, and meet Connecticut's commitments to help avoid the worst impacts of climate disruption. Hundreds of our members and supporters have already contacted their representatives in support of those goals and some parts of S.B. 9, *An Act Concerning Connecticut's Energy Future*. We provide below more detailed and specific comments outlining the parts of the bill we support and where changes must be made to realize those goals.

As we testified last year to this committee, throughout the Governor's Council on Climate Change ("GC3") process, and in comments on the Comprehensive Energy Strategy ("CES"), Connecticut's energy efficiency and renewable energy requirements are important, effective, successful and popular.¹ We are supportive of the proposed increase to Connecticut's Renewable Portfolio Standard ("RPS") and protections for energy savings programs contained in S.B. 9. However the proposed bill still falls short of the progress needed to maximize benefits to Connecticut residents, and would enact limits to clean energy programs that undermine many families' and businesses' ability to access those benefits. **Our full support is therefore contingent on the Committee making improvements to S.B. 9 before passage.**

In 2015 Connecticut established the GC3 with the express purpose of recommending "policies, regulations, or legislative actions" to assist in meeting the legislature's requirements under the Global Warming Solutions Act ("GWSA").² While the GC3 continues to develop

¹ http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=4423&q=568078&deepNav_GID=2121

² http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/climatechange/gc3/executive_order_46.pdf

those recommendations, analysis prepared throughout the process has painted a clear picture of the positive impact that stronger renewable energy requirements can have on jobs, economic growth, and budgets. For example, the scenario that included a 50% RPS by 2030 had the highest level of increase in revenues from the electric sector for critical state programs.³ This is in part due to more money staying in the regional economy for cleaner and cheaper fuels such as wind and solar, rather than being exported to buy dirty and dangerous energy sources from outside the region. **The Sierra Club supports increasing the RPS at a rate of 3% annually to the level of 50% by 2030, and encourages the Committee to adopt such a change.**

Cost-effective energy savings programs provide even more positive benefits to Connecticut businesses and families, and last year's unfortunate decision to divert funds from those programs to other uses was extremely disappointing. Thousands of jobs and tens of millions of dollars in energy savings and shared prosperity are at risk every year those funds are reduced. **Language included in S.B. 9 to ensure dollars contributed by Connecticut ratepayers go to successful energy savings programs must be passed this year.** However some of the other proposed changes to energy savings programs in the bill, including potentially adding additional bureaucracy or decreasing transparency by instituting a different procurement process, needs more discussion.

The Sierra Club agrees with the sentiment of the administration's strategy in the CES to "expand deployment of all cost-effective distributed generation ("behind the meter") in a sustainable manner".⁴ Unfortunately the final recommendations and the language included in S.B. 9 continue to miss the mark of that goal, particularly neglecting to fully recognize the importance of and value provided by simple access to the benefits of rooftop solar projects. Quite plainly, more discussion and study is needed before the flawed assessment of the value of distributed solar contained in the CES is translated into legislatively mandated changes. Major changes to successful programs such as net-metering that allow more Connecticut families and businesses to access and provide rooftop solar would be premature. **The Committee should instead amend S.B. 9 to require a full, public evaluation of the value of rooftop solar and a compensation program for participants that aligns with that evaluation.**

As outlined above, the Sierra Club's members and supporters would very much like to provide full-throated support for the legislature's important actions to reduce pollution, increase jobs, and grow the clean energy economy. By making some additional changes to S.B. 9, and then passing the bill, this Committee can make that possible.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,



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Beyond Coal Campaign, Sierra Club

Martha Klein
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Connecticut Chapter, Sierra Club

³ http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/climatechange/gc3/gc3_10_19_17/kresowik_sierra_club_11_8_17.pdf

⁴ http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/energy/ces/2018_comprehensive_energy_strategy.pdf