

Energy and Technology Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 30, 2019

10:30 AM in Room 1D of the LOB

The meeting was called to order at 10:42AM by Chairman, Rep. Arconti D. 109.

The following committee members were present:

Senators: Formica P. S20; Lesser M. S09; Needleman N. S33

Representatives: Ackert T. 008; Allie-Brennan R. 002; Arconti D. 109; Buckbee B. 067; Cheeseman H. 037; Davis C. 057; Demicco M. 021; Elliott J. 088; Ferraro C. 117; Gresko J. 121; Lanoue B. 045; Lopes R. 024; Meskers S. 150; Napoli R. 073; Perone C. 137; Petit W. 022; Piscopo J. 076; Steinberg J. 136; Tercyak P. 026; Winkler M. 056

Absent were:

Senators: Fonfara J. S01

Representatives: de la Cruz J. 041

Rep. Arconti greeted the committee and called the meeting to order and asked if the Leadership had any remarks.

Sen. Formica greeted the committee.

Rep. Ferraro stated that members were in other meetings and that is why some might be absent from today's meeting.

Rep. Arconti announced Item III on the agenda. [Substitute for S.B. No. 927](#) (RAISED) (File No. 260) AN ACT CREATING THE ENVIRONMENTAL INFRASTRUCTURE

FUND WITHIN THE CONNECTICUT GREEN BANK. (BA,ET). He called for a motion to JF the bill to the floor.

Rep. Gresko made the motion and Rep. Demicco seconded.

Rep. Arconti asked if there was any discussion.

Rep. Davis asked if the bill would not increase funding to Green Bank?

Rep Arconti replied that was his understanding.

Rep. Davis asked how the Green Bank was funded?

Rep. Arconti yielded the floor to Rep. Steinberg who replied that the Green Bank is funded through ratepayer contributions and through sources that are fairly protected.

Rep. Davis asked if the Green Bank is sitting on a pool of cash that they are incapable of spending and now looking for a place to spend this money by expanding what projects they can get involved in outside of what they were initially designed for?

Sen. Needleman replied no.

Rep. Davis stated that his concern is that they are funded through a ratepayer charge and that they may have excess funds that they are now looking to spend through an infrastructure fund. He is concerned that this could mean that Green Bank are either overcharging ratepayers or sitting on these funds. He is worried that in the future Green Bank will return to the legislature looking for additional funding to support projects they got involved in through expanding their scope through an infrastructure fund. Until he has been informed of their funding source and how they will be funding any new projects without raising the ratepayers contribution he cannot support the bill.

Rep. Steinberg replied that the Green Bank's total cash reserves wax and wane depending on the projects that they are involved in and the deals that they make and would not characterize them as "sitting on pools of cash" for extended period of time. His understanding is that the bill makes simply makes creates a reasonable expansion of the scope of the deals they can get involved in and therefore he is supporting the bill.

Sen. Needleman wanted to remind the committee that ET voted a bill out that would allow the Green Bank to access funds from USDA and that he has worked on clean infrastructure projects in his own district successfully. He reiterated that this bill is simply to allow them to expand the scope of projects that the Green Bank can get involved in and that he acknowledges that the bill has some work to be done beyond this committee. He encouraged the committee to vote the bill out so that it could see additional work and be voted on in the chambers.

Sen. Formica commented by reading lines 64 through 90 to help clarify to the committee what the bill would actually do and what it would expand for the Green Bank. He wanted to acknowledge the work the Green Bank does and the budget struggles which were generated by the legislature over the last few years. He stated that he is not sure where he stands on this bill so for now he is voting no to flag this for his caucus.

Rep. Buckbee echoed the thoughts of Sen. Formica and stated that until it hits the floor he is voting no to flag it for himself. He reserved the right to change his mind once discussion on the floor has occurred.

Rep. Meskers commented that he has concerns for the ratepayers but that the need for clarification for what the Green Bank can do is important. He wanted to clarify that we need to be very mindful to the overall cost to the ratepayers and make sure that this bill doesn't result in increasing costs to them. He stated that he originally wanted the Green Bank and Infrastructure Bank to be merged but that he withdrew support for that

legislation when he found out that it would result in an increase to the ratepayer. He is supporting this bill right now.

Rep. Cheeseman voiced her concerns about ratepayer impact but supports this bill because of the scope of the projects that it will allow the Green Bank to get involved in particularly concerning waste management projects which she feels are a pressing need in CT. She is hoping that this bill will give the bank a way to leverage its limited state funding to work with private industry investment and allow for these types of projects to happen. She stated that she is looking forward to the final version and supports the bill with a yes vote but looks forward to what will happen after the bill leaves the committee.

Rep. Lanoue echoed Rep. Cheeseman's comments and stated that he will be supporting the bill today but reserves the right to change his mind on the floor after discussion. He supports the bill if it expands environmental infrastructure work and projects which he feels will attract small business to his district. He respects the comments made by the committee members and looks forward to the final version of the bill.

***The motion passed***

***19 Yea - 4 Nay - 2 Absent/Not Voting***

A motion was duly made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00pm.

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Administrator

Ben Lovejoy  
Committee Clerk