



March 3, 2021

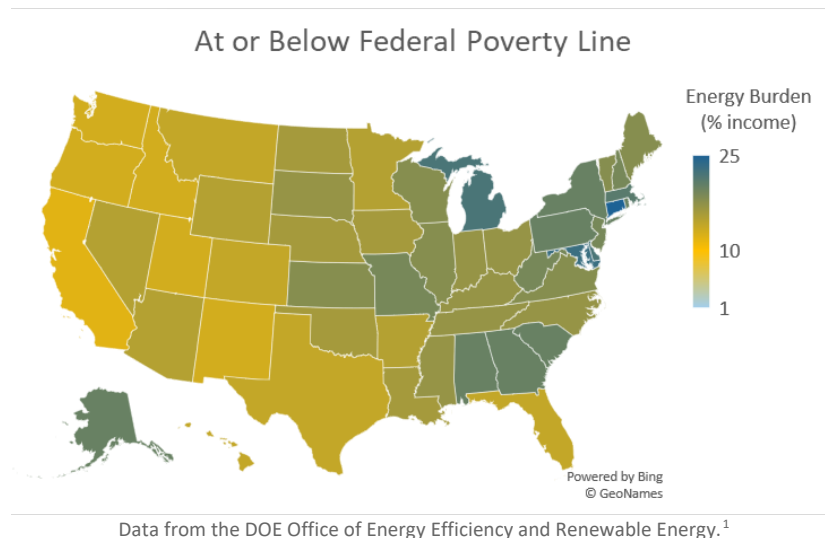
On behalf of the Connecticut Green Building Council (CTGBC) Board of Directors, we write today to express our strong support for SB-882 AN ACT CONCERNING CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND HOME ENERGY AFFORDABILITY.

The CTGBC is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and a chapter of the US Green Building Council (USGBC). We are committed to accelerating a healthy, equitable, resilient and sustainable transformation of Connecticut's built environment. Our membership includes developers, architects, engineers, consultants, building operators, builders and contractors, product manufacturers, public officials, and more. Several of our members volunteered to participate in the GC3 Working Groups to help Connecticut be a leader in developing policies and legislative actions that can reduce the negative impacts of climate change on our citizens.

As experts in the built environment we believe it is critical for home renters and buyers to know what to expect to pay in utility bills when they purchase or rent a home. We see this act of transparency as critical for homebuyers to know the quality of the largest purchase they will make, and to hold landlords accountable for the energy-efficiency of their units so renters are not surprised with unaffordable energy bills. We applaud that equity and environmental justice is fully addressed by including rental properties in this bill, and it must remain a key feature of this legislation.

Connecticut has one of the highest rates of energy poverty in the nation with those at or below the poverty line paying up to 25% of their income on energy bills.

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Before purchasing or leasing a car, one expects to know its efficiency in terms of miles per gallon or miles per kwh. The same transparency should exist for one's home which is a much larger share of one's income. A home energy disclosure costs very little to implement and will spur investment to improve a property's attractiveness and affordability to potential buyers and renters.

¹ 2019, [6 Maps That Show How Bad Energy Poverty Is and Reveal 2 Ways to Make it Better](#), Union of Concerned Scientists

We at the Connecticut Green Building Council believe that what isn't measured cannot be improved and measurement and transparency are one tool in increasing energy efficiency. Improving the energy efficiency of Connecticut's housing stock is critical for meeting the State's greenhouse gas emission reduction goals and to create a healthier more resilient Connecticut. Energy efficiency has health, equity, and economic benefits that benefit all State residents. Below are some of the benefits that are possible with greater levels of energy efficiency.

REDUCE STATEWIDE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

CT has committed to a 45% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and an 80% reduction by 2050. In order to achieve these goals, our existing housing stock needs to be transformed to be more energy efficient.

INCREASE RESILIENCY AND THE ABILITY TO WITHSTAND EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

The increased thermal comfort associated with a weatherized building envelope allows residents to shelter in place in extreme hot and cold temperatures even during power outages.

SAVE LIVES (6 PER DAY)

Reducing fossil fuel powered electricity by 15% nationally would save more than six lives every day.²

IMPROVE HEALTH

Energy efficiency prevents the 4 largest health killers by reducing air pollution: cancer, chronic lower respiratory diseases, heart disease, and stroke. It is estimated that 40% of diagnosed asthma is associated with home exposures.²

REDUCED HOSPITAL, MEDICAL VISITS, HEALTHCARE COSTS

For example, in Hartford, a 15% reduction in energy use could reduce health impacts by \$73 per capita annually.²

REDUCED ENERGY BURDENS

300,000 households in CT cannot afford their energy. At-risk populations spend up to 25% of their income on energy costs.

INCREASE DISPOSABLE MONEY FOR BUYING LOCAL GOODS AND SERVICES

Reducing energy costs allows for spending on critical items like food, medicine, and education.

GOOD JOBS

In 2016, energy efficiency programs supported 34,000 clean energy jobs in Connecticut. Investments in the energy efficiency workforce bring the highest return on investment of any green job - \$1M = 18 job years.³

INCREASE TAX REVENUE AND REDUCE SUBSIDY NEEDS

Good green jobs will increase the state's income tax revenue while reducing the need for subsidies for unemployment and energy assistance. Investing in energy efficiency will pay dividends for years to come.

REDUCED INCOME INEQUALITY

Connecticut has one of the highest rates of income inequality in the nation, which leads to many issues such as social unrest, volatility, lower health levels, lower education attainment, and reduced economic growth. Reducing income inequality can increase the quality of life for all in our state.

STIMULATE THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Increased spending on retrofits, good jobs, energy savings, and better health outcomes causing reduced absenteeism all have the benefit of improving the local economy.

² 2018 [Saving Energy, Saving Lives](#), American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy

³ 2020, [Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction](#), Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction.

We encourage the legislature to make the Home Energy Label a requirement in Sec 3 (b) 1 for all rental properties even if utilities are included in the rent to enable a renter to understand how much of their total rent is based on the estimated costs of electricity, heating and cooling. Home Energy Label disclosure to all renters will incentivize landlords to improve energy efficiency in their rental properties rather incentivizing landlords to include these electricity, heating and cooling costs in the rental rate to avoid complying with the Home Energy Label disclosure law.

Given the benefits of the legislation, we urge swift action in support of SB-882 AN ACT CONCERNING CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND HOME ENERGY AFFORDABILITY.

Sincerely,



Ross Spiegel, FAIA, FCSI, CCS, CCA, LEED AP BD+C
Chair, CT Green Building Council



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Vice Chair, CT Green Building Council
Co-chair, Advocacy Committee



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