

Dear Joint Committee on Energy and Technology, and also Governor Lamont, and DEEP,

My name is Melinda Tuhus. I'm representing the CT Climate Crisis Mobilization, or C3M for short. We are endorsed by 150 groups in CT to support youth climate strikes of 2019 and other climate actions since then. I'm here to testify in favor of Senate Bill 882, but only if certain changes are made.

As currently written the bill would count only the emissions from energy consumed in the state, not all the energy produced in the state. This explains how the Lamont administration can continue green-lighting fracked gas construction while touting a 100 percent carbon-free grid by 2040 – because none of that gas will be used in our state, but will be exported throughout New England.

It seems that with all the gas pipelines and power plants sited in CT, we are the tailpipe of the region. That's not my phrase, but it's accurate. ISO-New England has already said that states make the final decisions on siting, so if Gov. Lamont continues to approve these gas plants, that's on him.

So-called natural gas is another name for methane, a very potent greenhouse gas that is the second most damaging greenhouse gas emitted by human activity, behind CO<sub>2</sub>. And methane leaks at every stage of the process, from the well head to final use. According to experts like Tony Ingraffea and Robert Howarth of Cornell University, methane is 100 times worse for the climate, molecule for molecule, than carbon dioxide in the first ten years after release. Leakage rates make it worse for the climate than emissions from coal or oil.<sup>1</sup> According to the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), we have less than 10 years – until 2030 – before we are committed to irreversible climate change, setting us on the road to climate chaos. Can you see why the young climate activists I work with are terrified for their futures, but also working their hearts out to change your hearts?

There are three fracked gas power plants proposed for CT in the immediate future – one in Killingly, one in Middletown and one on the UConn campus in Storrs. The Killingly plant alone would emit 2 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> annually. These plants can't be built if we are to avoid the worst impacts of the climate crisis. And the good news is we are seeing utility scale off-shore wind being built along the New England shoreline, including Connecticut, and the largest solar farm in the

Northeast was just approved by the CT Siting Council. These developments, along with much more robust energy efficiency programs, point to the future we need and deserve.

So, the changes we need in SB 882 are 1) to count all the emissions produced in CT toward our goal of a carbon-free grid by 2040; 2) to establish a moratorium on new gas power plant construction and direct those billion-dollar investments into renewable energy instead (incorporating SB 718); and 3) include adequate funding for LMI households to get energy efficiency improvements in their homes so the bill's requirement of disclosure of energy costs doesn't end up hurting these families by making their homes harder to sell.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and thanks for listening.

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[http://www.eeb.cornell.edu/howarth/publications/Howarth\\_2014\\_ESE\\_methane\\_emissions.pdf](http://www.eeb.cornell.edu/howarth/publications/Howarth_2014_ESE_methane_emissions.pdf)

I'm also testifying against SB 950; it appears to be an end run around a very important recent PURA decision that helps protect our trees