



Save the Sound[®]

Action for our region's environment.

**Testimony of Save the Sound
Before the Insurance Committee**

In Support of S.B .1047 AN ACT CONCERNING INSURANCE AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Submitted by Charles J. Rothenberger

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March 18, 2021

Save the Sound is a nonprofit organization representing over 4,200 member households and 10,000 activists statewide. Our mission is to protect and improve the land, air, and water of Connecticut and the entire Long Island Sound region. We use legal and scientific expertise and bring citizens together to achieve results that benefit our environment for current and future generations.

Co-Chairs Lesser and Wood, Vice-Chairs Anwar and Comey, Ranking Members Hwang and Pavalock-D'Amato, and members of the Insurance Committee:

Save the Sound supports Senate Bill 1047, which would (1) require the Connecticut Department of Insurance to develop criteria for each insurer doing business in Connecticut to annually report on such insurer's investments in fossil-fuels and fossil-fuel industries, and the degree to which such insurer's investments are exposed to climate risk, and (2) require the Connecticut Department of Insurance to annually report on the Department's efforts (i) to integrate climate-related risks into its regulation and supervision of insurers, (ii) align insurer investment and underwriting activities with the climate mitigation goals of the Paris Climate Agreement, and (iii) bolster the resilience of insurers to the physical impacts of climate change.

We all know the crisis that we are facing with respect to climate change and the very real impacts that it poses for Connecticut, from more extreme heat days and the respiratory toll that takes on our most vulnerable citizens, to more frequent and more severe storms, to rising sea level rise and increased flood events. Moving forward we face the challenge of needing to decrease our emissions much more quickly in order to meet the medium and long-term mitigation targets that science tells us are essential.

This is important for Connecticut because while climate change is a global issue, we'll be feeling the impacts locally. With over 600 miles of coastline and more than two million people living in shoreline communities, Connecticut's residents and communities are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of weather and climate events. Sea level rise along Connecticut's coast is projected to be as high as 20 inches (nearly two feet) by 2050. As a result, communities in Connecticut should expect the frequency and intensity of coastal flooding to increase in coming decades due to accelerating trends in coastal erosion, increased extreme precipitation, and more frequent and stronger storms. As an example, Hurricane Irene in 2011 caused power outages affecting 754,000 customers and over \$1 billion in damage, while 2012's Hurricane Sandy 2012 caused power outages affecting more than 600,000 customers and inflicted almost \$2 billion in statewide damages.

Recognizing these threats, Connecticut has been at the forefront of state-level action to address climate change. We were among the first states to adopt mandatory greenhouse gas reduction targets in 2008. Since then, we have worked

to revise and strengthen the legislation over the years. We were also the first state in the nation to establish a Green Bank to leverage private capital to build a robust renewable energy market in Connecticut and to ensure the integration of energy efficiency investments and the deployment of renewable resources.

As the unofficial “insurance capitol of the world,” Connecticut is uniquely positioned to take steps to establish transparency and reporting requirements related to the climate-risk of underwriting activities that place the environment, public health, and the economy at risk.

We urge the Committee to support the bill and report it favorably out of Committee.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Charles J. Rothenberger

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