

# Labor and Public Employees Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-999

AN ACT CONCERNING A JUST TRANSITION TO CLIMATE-PROTECTIVE  
**Title:** ENERGY PRODUCTION AND COMMUNITY INVESTMENT.

**Vote Date:** 3/23/2021

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 3/11/2021

**File No.:**

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Labor and Public Employees Committee

### REASONS FOR BILL:

The climate crisis will cause a significant amount of destruction to human life and property if not addressed in a timely manner, and most of its negative effects have disproportionately burdened disadvantaged communities.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None submitted.

### NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Many speakers testified on the need for robust job creation programs in the wake of the pandemic and the urgency of the climate crisis. Noting that these issues can effectively solve each other with state action and can be structured in such a way as to address previous wrongdoings by elevating previously disadvantaged communities in these newly created economic opportunities.

- Mark Albertson
- Katherine Allison
- Catherine Bradley
- Holly Burrows
- Kelly Caesar
- Anthony Cherolis
- Sean Corvino
- Jan Cunningham

- Kathy Davis
- Eugene DeJoannis
- Philip Dooley
- Carol Duffy
- Beverly Dunn
- Elizabeth Eldridge
- enviroeducator@gmail.com
- Elias Estabrook
- Drew Felter
- Joelle Fishman
- Kenny Foscue
- Sarah Ganong
- Rachel Girshick
- Cate Grady-Benson
- Rosemarie Greco
- Lois Happe
- Carlyn Harris
- Jennifer Healy
- Lisette Henrey
- Nyree Hodges
- Janet Hooper
- Susan James
- Sneha Jayaraj
- Lynn Johnson
- Adelheid Koepfer
- Sam Levine
- Joseph Lewerk
- Katherine Mamed
- Taylor Mayes
- Matthew McCarthy
- Shirley McCarthy
- Jason Morris
- Shawn O'Sullivan
- Sandra Olsen
- Carole Osborn
- Sharad Pant
- Sarah Pemberton Strong
- Earl Retherford I
- Eli Roche
- Mustafa Salahuddin
- Sharon Samoska
- Mary Sanders
- Jeremy Schulick
- Chris Schweitzer
- John Stewart
- Kimberly Stoner

- Lindsay Suter
- Paul Swanke
- Annette Tchelka
- Rachel Thomas
- Lisa Tryon
- Anna Word
- Elizabeth Yetman

Several speakers testified to how well Connecticut has done in beginning its transition to sustainable energy production and workforce development. Local 777 is an industry leader in renewable energy, they've built every power generation facility in Connecticut while providing fair and equitable opportunities to their workers and local residents. The bill ensures the state will see a return on its investment.

- Anthony Camillucci, Local 777 Plumbers and Pipefitters of CT
- Michael Larson, Local 777 Plumbers and Pipefitters of CT
- Jay More, Local 777 Plumbers and Pipefitters of CT

**STEPHEN ANDERSON, PRESIDENT, CSEA SEIU LOCAL 2001**

Stephen testified to the economic benefits the bill would provide to the state such as more employment opportunities offered at good pay. He addressed the urgency of creating climate friendly infrastructure, as this bill does, and that the bill creates an in-state clean technology workforce.

**JOSHUA ANGELUS, WATERBURY**

Joshua testified to the needs of the moment being job creation and a change in our energy production systems. Joshua also spoke to difficulties presented by certain charges on utility bills and claimed that utility bills should be fairly based on usage. He asked the committee to instruct PURA to cut the monthly customer service charge by at least ten dollars.

**LYNNE BONNETT, NEW HAVEN**

Lynne testified in support of the bill's promotion of equitable economic development and environmental justice. Noting that creating new job opportunities for urban populations, which offer a living wage, also helps to create a more sustainable tax base within those urban communities. Thereby allowing those municipalities to better meet the needs of their communities.

**KEITH BROTHERS, SECRETARY TREASURER, CT STATE BUILDING TRADES**

Keith testified that the CT Building Trades is suffering from 30% unemployment, which he attributes mostly to a lack of state and federal infrastructure projects. The bill would help by creating jobs, some of which would require Connecticut workers.

**NATE BROWN, DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, LOCAL 478 OPERATING ENGINEERS**

Nate testified that Connecticut is doing well so far in its transition to renewable energy and that the trend will likely continue, increasing demand for skilled workers. However, while previous policies have helped to begin Connecticut's transition to sustainable energy, they haven't done much to create that skilled workforce. This bill helps to foster the creation of the

skilled workforce which will be required to transition to sustainable energy in a fair and inclusive manner.

**JILL CAPOTOSTO, NEW HAVEN**

Jill testified to her sense of dread when contemplating her future and the future of this planet. Governments are not doing enough to curb the devastating effects of the climate crisis. These effects disproportionately damage vulnerable communities. The bill offers hope and is an important step in preparing our state and communities for the effects of climate change.

**CAMERON CHAMPLIN, PLUMBERS AND PIPEFITTERS LOCAL 777**

Cameron testified that the bill requires entities which are approved to construct renewable energy projects subsidized by the state to provide comfortable wages and benefits to their workers, which in turn stimulates their local economies and small businesses. The bill also requires employers to offer a certified state apprenticeship program, which ensures them a positive career in the future. Those with Project Labor Agreements also ensure that local and distressed communities are included in the projects.

**QUEENIE COLLINS, GLASTONBURY**

Queenie testified that the transition to renewable energy requires a skilled workforce and the state should support its development. Creating good jobs for a green economy would increase support for further measures addressing climate change in the future.

**CONNECTICUT ROUNDTABLE ON CLIMATE AND JOBS**

The Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs testified on how the bill would address interrelated issues regarding the state's economy, job creation, and climate change. They spoke to the need for both job creation in the wake of the pandemic and the development of a clean technology workforce.

**AUGUST CORETTO, WINDSOR**

August testified to the anxiety they feel about their future and the future of society. Only drastic action can help stop climate change, and it can be done in an equitable way that creates good jobs. This bill is an important first step towards that.

**SEAN DALY, BUSINESS MANAGER, IBEW LOCAL 90**

Sean testified that the bill would ensure that local workers are hired to work on these important climate fighting energy projects. It will keep public money in Connecticut's economy, and reduce the high unemployment in the building trades.

**DWAYNE DAVID PAUL, DIRECTOR, COLLABORATIVE CENTER FOR JUSTICE**

The center, a religious organization, testified on the duty to care for creation and to improve the lives of marginalized communities. They urged the committee to keep provisions which prioritize disadvantaged communities in workforce development.

**AZIZ DEHKAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CONNECTICUT ROUNDTABLE ON CLIMATE AND JOBS**

Aziz testified on the various interests which support the bill including labor interests, environmental interests, social justice interests, conservative interests, and industry interests. The testimony includes additional information on the indirect benefits for elected officials, the

costs associated with solar energy production, and general comments on potential outcomes resulting from, and topics related to, the bill.

**SAMANTHA DYNOWSKI, STATE DIRECTOR, SIERRA CLUB CONNECTICUT**

Samantha testified to the scientific consensus on climate change which requires a dramatic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions to curb its most severe effects. The Sierra Club supports achieving the economic goals of this legislation through a prevailing wage, project labor agreements, and workforce development for future clean energy jobs.

**TIMOTHY GABRIELE, NORTH HAVEN**

Timothy testified to the importance of investing in the future of our climate to protect our natural resources, people, and economy. This bill addresses all three simultaneously and incentivizes a well trained and equitable renewable energy workforce.

**SARAH GANONG, CAMPAIGNS DIRECTOR, CONNECTICUT WORKING FAMILIES**

Sarah testified that the health and well-being of working people is tied to their jobs, communities, and environment. This bill benefits all of these areas by equitably providing good clean energy jobs to historically disadvantaged communities.

**KIMBERLY GLASSMAN, DIRECTOR, FOUNDATION FOR FAIR CONTRACTING OF CONNECTICUT, INC.**

The Foundation submitted testimony stating the importance of transitioning to more efficient and environmentally conscious energy procurement systems. They praised the commitment to workforce development for underserved communities in this bill and previous pieces of legislation.

**RENEE HAMEL, FIELD REPRESENTATIVE, COUNCIL 4 AFSCME**

Renee testified that the bill ensure that communities most effected by climate change are a part of the solution. The climate crisis presents three urgent needs - the need to justly transition workers, the need to minimize harm to communities disproportionately affected by climate, economic, and racial inequality, and the need to equitably create jobs and economic growth in the wake of the pandemic.

**MICHAEL HARRIS, MIDDLETOWN**

Michael testified to the urgency of the climate crisis and how it would require a massive shift in our energy systems. Not only would the bill address these issues, but it would also strengthen Connecticut's economy.

**JOHN HARRITY, CHAIR, CONNECTICUT ROUNDTABLE ON CLIMATE AND JOBS**

John testified that the bill addresses the core of what will be needed as climate change disrupts many aspects of society. At this point we're faced with a question - whether renewable energy jobs will become the new path into the middle class.

**ELISABETH HOLDER, MIDDLETOWN**

Elisabeth testified, as a retired Earth Science teacher, to her alarm at insufficient solutions to the climate crisis and how they will affect the environment, public infrastructure, and budgets. The climate crisis is reaching a tipping point at the same time we're facing an economic depression as a result of the pandemic. Both of these issues are addressed by this bill.

**WILLIAM MORIARTY, BUSINESS MANAGER & FINANCIAL SECRETARY, IBEW LOCAL 35**

William testified that IBEW workers undergo rigorous training, are highly skilled, and have built many public buildings across the state. Connecticut's electricians have helped to achieve the lowest workplace death rate in America.

**JENNIFER KLEINDIENST, MIDDLETOWN**

Jennifer testified to the bill's ability to reframe the climate debate from climate versus jobs to climate and jobs. The bill would help to solve the climate crisis and the economic crisis by helping to develop a clean energy workforce in disadvantaged communities.

**ELUNED LI, NEW HAVEN**

Eluned testified on how the bill addresses both climate and poverty crises by supporting the development of a clean technology workforce. The bill would help to train disadvantaged residents for careers in clean technology, and thereby strengthening Connecticut's economy.

**HENRY LOWENDORF, NEW HAVEN**

Henry testified to the multiple compounding crises of our time including the pandemic, the climate crisis, endless wars and subsequent forced migrations, and increasing wealth and income disparities. Henry suggested that all these issues may play a role in solving each other, and that this bill addresses two of them.

**SAL LUCIANO, PRESIDENT, CONNECTICUT AFL-CIO**

Sal testified that the bill addresses environmental, labor, and community needs by including several key labor protections targeted at aiding disadvantaged communities. Responsible contractor provisions ensure that contracted firms are reputable and qualified to complete the necessary work in addressing climate change.

**SUSAN MILLER, CHAIR, WINDSOR CLIMATE ACTION**

Susan testified to two crises that we currently face – an economic crisis as a result of the pandemic, and the climate crisis. Susan stressed that both crises demand action. This bill addresses both crises while creating careers for those who need them most.

**NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION & IBEW LOCALS 488, 90, & 35**

NECA and IBEW testified that they represent the "community investment" portion of the bill. They testified to their robust training and apprenticeship programs, and that their workers are among the highest skilled and safest in the nation. They stressed that their workers are residents of the state and would therefore keep state money spent on these projects in Connecticut.

**ALLISON PILCHER, BRIDGEPORT**

Allison testified that the bill addresses three ongoing crises – climate change, inequality, and an economic recession. The bill does these things while focusing on workforce development for disadvantaged communities. Allison stated that we will still see renewable energy development without this bill, although likely at a slower pace, with lower wages, and out of state workers which do not benefit the state to the same degree.

**DAVID ROCHE, PRESIDENT, CONNECTICUT BUILDING TRADES**

David testified that the Connecticut Building Trades has a long and storied history in helping to meet the energy needs of America. Their workers are trained to construct these projects on time and on budget with fair pay and benefits. They've worked on many energy projects throughout Connecticut in the past and are prepared to do so again.

**JAMES ROOT, DANBURY**

James testified to the necessity of this bill in ensuring that local communities feel the financial benefits of future public funding directed to these renewable energy projects.

**EBEN ROSS, HAMDEN**

Eben testified to the importance of job creation in responding to the economic and climate crises. This bill creates careers in-state by developing a clean technology workforce.

**JOSEPH TONER, PRESIDENT, GREATER HARTFORD-NEW BRITAIN BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL**

Joseph testified on behalf of the CSBT that they've played an important role in delivering power to Connecticut in the past and are proud to do so in the future. The pandemic has revealed some vulnerabilities in the industry, high unemployment and state budgetary constraints. This bill ensures a return on investment for the state.

**ROBERTA WILLIS, FORMER STATE REPRESENTATIVE, LAKEVILLE**

Roberta testified that the bill effectively addresses both the economic impacts of the pandemic, through job creation, and the climate crisis. The bill addresses these issues while aiding in training people from disadvantaged communities to create a clean technology workforce.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**CHRISTOPHER FRYXELL, PRESIDENT, ASSOCIATED BUILDERS AND CONTRACTORS CONNECTICUT**

Christopher testified to ABC Connecticut's issues with the section mandating a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) for certain parties. They said that the mandate would violate Sec. 31-56b of the CT General Statutes, it discriminates against many of Connecticut's businesses and workers who aren't unionized, and that the mandate would result in higher costs and fewer projects completed. ABC Connecticut said that PLAs ultimately do not benefit the public, only unions.

**FUELCELL ENERGY, INC.**

FuelCell submitted testimony stating that the bill would increase energy costs for Connecticut's consumers, make Connecticut's clean energy and technology companies less competitive, and worsen an already hostile environment towards fuel cells here in Connecticut.

**MICHAEL TRAHAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SOLARCONNECTICUT**

Michael testified on behalf of SolarConn that the bill would hurt small businesses and electric ratepayers in Connecticut. The bill would raise the cost of developing small commercial ground mount solar systems for small businesses at a time when they can bear those costs least effectively. Small businesses would be forced to lay off clean technology workers.

SolarConn would be glad to work with the committee on how to speed solar growth by allowing the market to work freely.

**Reported by: Mike Antonakos, Assistant Clerk      Date: 4/5/2021**