

Environment Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-73

AN ACT ESTABLISHING LOCAL REPRESENTATION ON THE CONNECTICUT

Title: SITING COUNCIL FOR LOCAL PROJECTS.

Vote Date: February 17, 2023

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 1/30/2023

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Environment Committee

Reasons for the Bill:

To allow local representation on the Connecticut Siting Council for local projects.

Substitute Languages-LCO 4249

Allows elector from local municipality to be a non-voting member.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Expressed

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Eileen Ciampini, Professional Engineer

She supports SB 73 because this would enable proper review, input and approval of the local municipalities and residents who would be affected by installation of infrastructure currently reviewed and approved by the CT Siting Council.

Patrick M. Comins, Executive Director, The Connecticut Audubon Society

The Connecticut Audubon Society Supports SB 73 because local knowledge of ecological features and be essential in evaluating the potential impact of transmission and infrastructure projects and local representation on the council would handle this situation.

Over 17 people sent in testimony in strong support for SB73

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION

Melanie Bachman, Executive Director, Connecticut Siting Council

CSG Opposes SB 73 because several practical and legal reasons still exist in this bill.

1. Voting members who formerly served as municipal chief elected officials already serve as voting members.
2. CSC members recuse from proceeding held on any facility that is proposed to be located in the municipality where they reside.
3. Off the record communications with a CSC member or its staff is prohibited by law.
4. Municipalities have an absolute right to participate in CSC proceedings as a party and appeal.
5. Electric transmission line facilities generally traverse multiple municipalities and counties.
6. Applicants are required by law to consult with the municipalities where a facility is proposed to be located prior to submitting an application to CSC.
7. Communications between the voting members of CSC and their attorneys on the substance of any matter and the legal strategy for any matter are privileged and confidential.

Jeffery Cochran, Principal Counsel, Eversource Energy

Eversource Opposes SB73 because the proposed changes are unnecessary, and it could easily create circumstances that would undermine the careful and orderly process of the Siting Council's proceedings and deliberations and conflict with current law covering ex parte communications.

Reported by: Judith Ganswindt

Date: February 22, 2023