

Energy and Technology Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-301 (LCO 3379)

AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS AND GRANTS
Title: FOR RETROFITTING PROJECTS.

Vote Date: 3/21/2024

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/7/2024

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

[Senator Julie Kushner, 24th District](#)

[Representative David Michel, 146th District](#)

[Representative Anne M. Hughes, 135th District](#)

[Representative Brandon Chafee, 33rd District](#)

REASONS FOR BILL:

Connecticut's energy efficiency standards have not been updated in thirteen years, and in that time the state has fallen behind in energy efficiency compared to its neighbors. Connecticut residents are more likely to create more carbon emissions and use more energy due to this. This also effects the state's ratepayers. To achieve Connecticut's energy efficiency goals such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, this bill aims to update the energy efficiency standards.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

In Section 1. Section 16a-48 of the general statutes is repealed, and the following is substituted in lieu thereof; section (28) definition of compensation was removed from the language, no substitution. The meaning for all the key words in the bill has been updated. In section (M) Ss (3) DEEP may adopt regulations on products to meet the minimum energy efficiency levels provided thru the chapter 54 provisions. Section (M) Ss (3)(a) CT DEEP may adopt regulations that require additional products to be subject to establish efficiency and greenhouse gas emissions reduction standards.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Katie Dykes, Commissioner at CT DEEP, SB-301 An Act Concerning Energy Efficiency Standards and Grants for Retrofitting Projects DEEP is in support of SB-301 and

provisions in sections 1 and 2. Connecticut needs to update its product efficiency standards for the first time in thirteen years, with the goal to avoid energy waste, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and save consumers money. Also, to increase the flexibility of funding assigned to support energy and environmental upgrades in multifamily residences located in environmental justice communities or alliance districts.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Samantha Dynowski, State Director, Sierra Club of CT

SB-301 AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS AND GRANTS FOR RETROFITTING PROJECTS. The Sierra Club supports SB 301 and the provisions in Section 1 which updates Energy Efficiency Standards for various consumer products. This will save energy money, save energy, and be good for the climate. Section 2 modifies the Housing Environmental Improvement Revolving Loan Fund passed by the legislature in 2023 to allow grants in addition to loans. The Sierra Club is a strong support of the 2023 legislation and supports this modification.

Elizabeth Gara, Executive Director, CT Water Works Association

SB-301 AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS AND GRANTS FOR RETROFITTING PROJECTS CWWA which represents municipal, private, and regional water companies, supports the provisions in SB-301 which update state water efficiency standards for appliances and other equipment. Replacing household appliances and fixtures with more efficient models, such as low flow toilets, showerheads, and dishwashers, has been very effective in promoting water conservation.

Aziz Dehkan, Executive Director of Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs

SB-301 An Act Concerning Energy Efficiency Standards and Grants for Retrofitting Projects CRCJ supports SB-301 it would improve and expand minimum energy and water efficiency standards for products sold and installed in the state and authorize DEEP to add additional product standards. In addition, SB-301 would expand the existing Housing Environmental Improvement Revolving Loan Fund to offer grants in addition to loans for low-income residents. This program supports residential energy retrofits in environmental justice communities and alliance districts, offering support to communities most in need so that they are not left behind in the transition to clean energy.

Mark Mitchell, Co-Chair of Connecticut Equity and Environmental Justice Advisory Council (CEEJAC)

SB-301 An Act Concerning Energy Efficiency Standards and Grants for Retrofitting. CEEJAC is in strongly support this bill and the need for grants. In environmental justice communities, there are often barriers to participation in state programs that seldom exist in other communities due to several factors. Specifically, there are barriers to participation in the energy efficiency programs, in addition to those listed in the bill, that need to be removed before residents can access the program. CEECAJ proposes that the bill be expanded to provide funding to remove other barriers besides those listed.

The following are also in **support** of **SB-301 An Act Concerning Energy Efficiency and Grants for Retrofitting:**

Katherine Allison, Ben Candea, Bradford Czepiel, Eric Drouin, Diane Keefe, Cary Lynch, Anne Penniman, Charles Rothenberger, Jayson Velasquez, James Anderson, Katherine

Coleman, Eileen O'Donnell, Brian Fadie, Andrea Gauvin, Courtney Griffin, Tyler Jones, Adelheid Koepfer, Jeff Mauk, Laura O'Brien, Francis Pickering, Sagarika Subramanian, Kyle Thompson, Alison Zyla

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Jim Heckman, General Counsel of CT REALTORS, SB-301 AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS AND GRANTS FOR RETROFITTING PROJECTS

CT REALTORS is opposed to SB-301, the proposal would require any appliance sold in the state to be energy-star rated. Unless this proposal was a law in every surrounding state including online, this change will mostly impact small businesses which rely on these purchases and cause them to lose business. Real estate is an economic driver as the purchase of any home can lead to improvements and purchases made by the new owners, including changing appliances, buying furniture, painting, landscaping, buying lawnmowers, etc.

Jim Perras, CEO of HOME BUILDERS & REMODELERS ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT, INC. SB-301 AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS AND GRANTS FOR RETROFITTING PROJECTS.

HBRA of CT respectfully requests that Energy & Technology Committee strikes Section-1 in SB-301 bill in its entirety. Section-1 of this bill would mandate 2.0 Energy Star ratings for appliances sold, leased, or installed in Connecticut. While they share the commitment to environmental sustainability, this measure imposes an undue burden on housing affordability and accessibility. The increased costs associated with universally implementing 2.0 Energy-Star rated appliances will unduly affect vulnerable populations, hindering their ability to access affordable housing. The residential construction industry urges the committee to consider the economic ramifications of this bill and reject it to ensure a balanced approach that supports environmental goals without exacerbating housing disparities.

The following are also in **opposition** to **SB-301 AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS AND GRANTS FOR RETROFITTING PROJECTS:**

Doctor David Green

Lindsay Suter- Architect

Reported by: Josh Reyes and Abigail Lockwood Date: April 4th, 2024