

Environment Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1281

AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY ON THE NEED FOR EXTENDED
PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY FOR SOLAR PANELS AND WIND TURBINE

Title: BLADES.

Vote Date: 2/28/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/19/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Environment Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The purpose of this bill is to study the need to establish extended producer responsibility programs for solar panels and wind turbine blades.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Katie S. Dykes, Commissioner, CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection

DEEP Supports the concept of SB 1281 but has concerns about the study provisions within the bill and the ability to do this work within existing resources as such a study was not in the Governor's proposed budget. Most effective EPR programs with the least fiscal impact in use an independent representative organization to oversee the stewardship program for specific products' end-of-life. The Mattress Recycling Council and PaintCare are two such independent organizations that implement EPR for their market sectors with DEEP's oversight. DEEP recommends that the bill language be clarified to include an independent organization to oversee such a stewardship program.

James Desantos, Director of Legislative & Regulatory Policy, The Connecticut Green Bank

The Connecticut Green Bank presented the "Solar and Battery End of Life Consideration". PURA determined that a proactive approach is needed to resolve the potential issue of solar panel and battery waste. PURA requested the Connecticut Green Bank convene and lead a working group of relevant stakeholders, including DEEP and the Electric Distribution Companies to develop by August 1, 2024, recommendations to resolve the potential issue of solar panel and battery recycling and waste for clean energy projects in Connecticut. A final report was prepared by Power Advisory on the Green Bank's behalf and is available by clicking on The Connecticut Green Banks Testimony.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

James Berardino, Legislative Director, COST

COST Supports SB 1228. Extended Producer Responsibility programs should be a major component of any statewide plan to manage solid waste efficiently and effectively. COST also agrees with the concerns of DEEP in that an independent representative organization should oversee the stewardship program to sustain the least fiscal impact and maximize efficiency.

Amanda E. Kennedy, Executive Director, Southeastern CT Council of Government

SECOG Supports SB 1281 which calls for DEEP with PURA, to study the need to establish extended producer responsibility programs in the state for discarded solar panels and wind turbine blades. SECOG identifies solid waste disposal as a priority item for legislative action, specifically highlighting the need for expanded EPR programs.

Julianna Mc Veigh, Save the Sound

Save the Sound supports the EPR concept that holds producers accountable for waste management, recycling, or disposal, often incentivizing them to design products that are more sustainable and easier to recycle but it is important that the study explores methods to ensure that the implementation of EPR does not increase the cost of solar and wind deployment for ratepayers or interested consumers. The study could propose solutions such as shared industry responsibilities, government incentives for sustainable production, and technological innovations in recycling.

Francis Pullaro, President, RENEW Northeast, Inc.

RENEW supports responsible use of clean energy resources including sustainable disposal solutions through advanced recycling and repurposing methods that will eliminate waste and maximize the environmental benefits of clean energy.

Nathan Furling, Director of External Affairs, The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy testified their general support of SB 1281. As a conservation organization they share the suggested aim of this bill. The need to understand and account for the waste and potential costs of disposing solar panels and wind turbine blades. Their concern is the study recommendations might disproportionately burden renewable energy compared to other forms of energy and product development.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Expressed

Reported by: Judith Ganswindt

Date: March 12, 2025