



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 253

February Session, 2026

Substitute House Bill No. 5457

House of Representatives, March 30, 2026

The Committee on Public Safety and Security reported through REP. BOYD of the 50th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING FIRES AND EXPLOSIONS THAT OCCUR AT SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC FACILITIES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 29-303 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

3 (a) The fire chief or local fire marshal with jurisdiction over a town,
4 city, borough or fire district where a fire, explosion or other fire
5 emergency occurs shall furnish the State Fire Marshal a report that shall
6 include (1) all the facts relating to its cause, its origin, the kind, the
7 estimated value and ownership of the property damaged or destroyed,
8 and (2) such other information as called for by the State Fire Marshal on
9 forms furnished by the State Fire Marshal, or in an electronic format
10 prescribed by the State Fire Marshal. The fire chief or fire marshal may
11 also submit reports regarding other significant fire department response
12 to such fire or explosion, and such reports may be filed monthly but
13 commencing January 1, 2008, such reports shall be filed not less than
14 quarterly.

15 (b) For any fire or explosion that occurs at a facility, as defined in
16 subdivision (3) of subsection (a) of section 16-50i, that is a solar
17 photovoltaic facility, the local fire marshal shall also furnish the report
18 described in subsection (a) of this section to the Connecticut Siting
19 Council established under section 16-50j.

20 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2026*) (a) Not later than thirty days
21 after the Connecticut Siting Council receives a report regarding a fire or
22 explosion that occurred at a facility that is a solar photovoltaic facility,
23 furnished pursuant to subsection (b) of section 29-303 of the general
24 statutes, as amended by this act, the council shall, in conjunction with
25 the local fire marshal who furnished the report, determine whether any
26 solar photovoltaic facility equipment at the facility was a contributing
27 factor to the fire or explosion. Notwithstanding any provision of chapter
28 277a of the general statutes, if the council determines, in conjunction
29 with the local fire marshal, that such equipment was such a factor, the
30 council shall initiate an amendment proceeding to amend the certificate
31 issued to the owner of the facility pursuant to said chapter. The purpose
32 of such amendment proceeding shall be to require the owner to adopt a
33 solar photovoltaic facility fire mitigation plan. Any such mitigation plan
34 adopted in accordance with this section shall include, but not be limited
35 to, an explicit description of the best management practices the owner
36 will employ, informed by the latest science at the time the plan is
37 formed, that will avoid, minimize and mitigate any fire or explosion
38 risks relating to solar photovoltaic facilities. For purposes of this section,
39 "facility" has the same meaning as provided in subdivision (3) of
40 subsection (a) of section 16-50i of the general statutes.

41 (b) Not later than one hundred eighty days after the conclusion of an
42 amendment proceeding that was initiated under subsection (a) of this
43 section and that resulted in the adoption of a solar photovoltaic facility
44 fire mitigation plan, the council shall determine if there are any facilities
45 in the state that are similarly situated to the facility that was the subject
46 of such order. If the council determines that there are any such similarly
47 situated facilities, the council may, notwithstanding any provision of
48 chapter 277a of the general statutes, initiate an amendment proceeding

49 to amend the certificate issued to any owner of a similarly situated
 50 facility pursuant to said chapter. The purpose of such amendment
 51 proceeding shall be to require such owner to adopt the same solar
 52 photovoltaic facility fire mitigation plan as the mitigation plan adopted
 53 in accordance with subsection (a) of this section.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2026	29-303
Sec. 2	October 1, 2026	New section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 2(a), "the owner will employ, that are informed by the latest science" was changed to "the owner will employ, informed by the latest science" for clarity.

PS *Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$
CT Siting Council	SCF ¹ - Cost	192,002	192,002

Note: SCF=Siting Council Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill results in a cost to the Connecticut Siting Council Fund of \$192,002 annually, beginning in FY 27. The bill requires the Siting Council to determine whether any solar photovoltaic facility equipment was a contributing factor in a fire or explosion. If so, the council must initiate an amendment proceeding to amend the certificate issued to the facility's owner to require the owner to adopt a solar photovoltaic facility fire mitigation plan.

It is estimated that the new requirements of the bill will result in one full-time Siting Analyst 2 position, with an annual salary of \$110,000 and corresponding fringe benefits of \$46,002. Additionally, it is estimated that the additional requirements for solar photovoltaic facility equipment will result in three additional Siting Council hearings, annually, which will result in an additional cost of approximately \$36,000.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would

¹ Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) §16-50r and §16-50v, the Council's budget is financed by fees and assessments paid to the Siting Council Fund.

continue into the future subject to inflation and the number of additional hearings, yearly.

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 5457*****AN ACT CONCERNING FIRES AND EXPLOSIONS THAT OCCUR AT SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC FACILITIES.*****SUMMARY**

By law, fire chiefs or local fire marshals must report fires, explosions, and other fire emergencies to the State Fire Marshal. This bill requires local fire marshals to also give the Connecticut Siting Council this incident report for any fire or explosion at a solar photovoltaic (PV) electric generating facility under the council's jurisdiction (see BACKGROUND). By law, these reports must include (1) facts about the incident's cause, origin, and nature; (2) the estimated value and ownership of the property damaged or destroyed; and (3) any other information the State Fire Marshal requests.

The bill also sets conditions under which the Siting Council must open an amendment proceeding to require these facility owners to adopt a fire mitigation plan and may require other similar facilities to do the same.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

FIRE MITIGATION PLANS FOR SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC ELECTRIC GENERATING FACILITIES

Under the bill, within 30 days after receiving a fire or explosion incident report, the Siting Council, together with the fire marshal that delivered the report, must determine whether any solar PV facility equipment was a contributing factor to the fire or explosion. If so, the council must open an amendment proceeding to amend the certificate issued to the facility's owner to require the owner to adopt a solar PV facility fire mitigation plan. The plan must at least include an explicit description of the best management practices the owner will use,

informed by the latest science when the plan is made, to avoid, minimize, and mitigate fire or explosion risks at the facility.

Within 180 days after the end of an amendment proceeding in which a fire mitigation plan was adopted, the Siting Council must determine if there are any other Connecticut facilities similarly situated to the facility subject to the amendment. If so, it may initiate an amendment proceeding to require the facility's owner to adopt the same fire mitigation plan.

BACKGROUND

Electric Generating Facilities Under Siting Council Jurisdiction

The Siting Council has jurisdiction over siting most electric generation and storage facilities, but its jurisdiction does not extend to emergency generators or generation facilities that are:

1. owned and operated by a private power producer (certain non-utility generators);
2. a qualifying small power production facility or a qualifying cogeneration facility under the federal Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act (a facility that uses renewable energy or simultaneously produces electricity and useful heat) or a facility the council determines to be primarily for a producer's own use; or
3. a renewable energy facility with a generating capacity of 1 megawatt (MW) or less or a cogeneration facility with a capacity of 25 MW or less (CGS § 16-50i(a)(3)).

Related Bill

sHB 5472, favorably reported by the Energy and Technology Committee, (1) requires covered electric generating or storage facilities to report certain major and minor incidents to the Siting Council and designate an emergency contact person and (2) allows the Siting Council, in approving these facilities, to require applicants to provide emergency services training for their proposed facilities to local

firefighters or other local emergency services personnel.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Safety and Security Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 23 Nay 6 (03/17/2026)