February 19, 2026

Environment Committee
Legislative Office Building
Room 3200
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

IN RE: **Opposition to H.B. 5156, "An Act Concerning A Climate Change Superfund"**

Chair Lopes, Chair Parker, Vice Chair Hochadel, Vice Chair Bumgardner, Ranking Member Harding, Ranking Member Callahan, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Consumer Energy Alliance (CEA), my name is Bryson Hull and I thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to HB 5156. At CEA, we advocate for affordable, reliable, and cleaner energy that benefits families, small businesses, and communities. We judge every policy by one standard: does it deliver affordable, reliable, and cleaner energy?

H.B. 5156 fails that test — badly.

Affordability is already an issue many Connecticut families struggle with, in large part because we pay some of the highest electricity rates in the nation. This proposal is, at its core, a massive tax on the fuels that heat our homes, power our vehicles, and keep the lights on — and that tax will be passed directly to every Connecticut family, business, and farm.

This bill would make Connecticut a less attractive a place to live, raise a family or run a business.

If you support affordability in deed and not word, I urge you to vote against this legally fraught proposal.

The Vermont and New York laws on which H.B. 5156 is modeled – with the help of special interest groups who sit here today in support of it and higher costs for Connecticut's people – are already being challenged in court. This bill attempts to achieve legislatively what a privately-funded litigation campaign could not, having been thrown out of multiple courts as meritless – and exposing California's attorney-general to a defamation lawsuit in the process.

Let's examine this bill with the New York law as a benchmark. The New York law imposes $75 billion in retroactive liability on energy companies for their sale of legal products to willing consumers. That $75 billion is a cap, whereas this bill proposes an open-ended analysis by state agencies of costs – which amounts to a blank check at taxpayer expense. The Fiscal Note accompanying this bill must be robust and thorough.

Using New York's cost analysis as a benchmark, we analyzed Connecticut's documented fuel use according to U.S. Energy Information Administration. With this conservative method, the numbers are staggering: a roughly $45 billion cost, about $25 billion for gasoline and the remainder for the natural

gas and oil used to bring us electricity from 1995 to 2024. This is simple math grounded in H.B. 5156's 30-year timeframe and federal data on how much fuel Connecticut used over that time.

Connecticut's citizens are already frustrated at the roughly $1 billion a year imposed on utility ratepayers – nearly all of whom are taxpayers – via the Public Benefits Charge. This would dwarf that.

There are those who will argue that this will not be passed on to Connecticut consumers, but that is fiction. Energy costs are baked into every product we buy and every service we use. This expensive new tax will be passed through to every one of us when we fill our gas tanks, recharge our electric cars, heat our homes and switch on a light.

Traditional fuels have provided 80% of global energy supply for decades, according to the International Energy Agency, and that reality is not changing any time soon. That number holds in Connecticut – where more than 78% of homes are heated by natural gas, propane and oil, according to U.S. Census data. A further 18% are heated by electricity, more than half of which in this state is generated by natural gas and oil.

CEA strongly urges this committee to vote H.B. 5156 unfavorably. At a time when affordability is a kitchen-table concern for Connecticut's people, a vote in favor is a vote for needlessly making their lives more expensive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Bryson Hull

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