

March 20, 2013

To the Honorable Brendan Sharkey, Speaker of the House, the Honorable Donald Williams, Senate President Pro Tempore, the Honorable Bob Duff and Lonnie Reed, co-Chairs Energy and Technology Committee

cc: Commissioner Dan Esty, Tracy Babbidge, Jessie Stratton, Alex Kragie

Given the flood of testimony and comments around SB 1138 centered on the March 19 hearing the undersigned business, environmental, labor and community organizations thought that it would be helpful to you to provide a few clear principles that we all agree upon about this legislation:

First, we agree wholeheartedly with the need to rapidly move forward with explicitly creating authorization for Connecticut participation in a coordinated regional procurement of Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) Class I eligible power like wind and solar on a long term basis. We also strongly support establishment of a long term contracting program in Connecticut as a way to reduce the cost of renewable and clean energy and compliance with Connecticut's RPS goals for Connecticut consumers. Given the "need for speed" created by the very limited renewal of the federal tax credit this authorization should move forward without delay. Indeed, we would urge you to adjust the language creating this authorization (the new section (h) inserted into C.G.S.A. 16-245a by Section 5 of the version of the bill denominated as LCO 4767) to create a floor for such procurements, not a ceiling. Instead, we would suggest that distribution companies be required to have under long-term contract power equivalent to half the RPS demand, which would mean that the amount under contract would float upwards, tracking the RPS. Our groups can supply legislative language on this point if that would be helpful. We would note that the extension of the RPS increases further into the future (a 25% by 2025 provision) would be deeply consistent with such a move as the use of long-term contracts to reduce both the immediate price of RPS compliance and provide a clear path to stable and lower cost long term compliance with this important environmental and economic development effort.

Second, we strongly oppose lowering the RPS Class I target to accommodate the procurement of large scale hydroelectric power from outside the region. The RPS has been a very effective mechanism for building new resources and diversifying the power that is provided to Connecticut – indeed it has inspired the building of wind projects that are just now coming online and helping to shift our regional power supply towards cleaner and domestic sources. As you can see from the testimony at the hearing and filed with the committee, many of us would be comfortable with a separate mechanism for procuring such power. While opinions among our organizations may vary on the larger role of large Canadian hydroelectric power we all agree that if Connecticut is going to procure such power it should obey the Hippocratic Oath and "first do no harm" – in this case to the RPS. Connecticut government should not send a message to its citizens, the business community and the nation that it is giving up on a critical environmental mandate that is just starting to yield significant benefits in terms of bringing on line large amounts of zero-emissions renewable energy.

Third, we believe that an open and inclusive dialogue is needed about the many other changes to the RPS proposed in the legislation. Frankly, important discussion of the biomass emissions standards, the

changes in eligibility for Class III, the question of thermal participation in the RPS and the changes to smaller hydro eligibility have all been understandably drowned out by the larger question about whether Class I, the core of the RPS, will be modified. We propose that once the question of the reduction in Class I is off the table and we have a path towards resolving the question of Canadian hydro it will be possible to calmly and separately engage each of these discrete and important issues.

Roger Smith, Connecticut Co-Director, Clean Water Action

Tom Swan, Connecticut Citizen Action Group

Abe Scarr, Director, ConnPIRG

Seth Kaplan, Vice President for Policy & Climate Advocacy, Conservation Law Foundation

Christopher Phelps, State Director, Environment Connecticut

Joel Gordes, President, Environmental Energy Solutions

John Murphy, Assistant Business Manager, IBW Local 1228

Terri Eickel, Executive Director, Interreligious Eco-Justice Network

Janet Gail Besser, Vice President of Policy and Government Affairs, New England Clean Energy Council

Judi Friedman, People's Action for Clean Energy

Francis Pullaro, RENEW

Justin Haaheim, Connecticut Regional Coordinator, 350.org

Jonathan Leibovic, Community Organizer, Toxics Action Center

Pippa Bell-Ader, Westport Home Energy Challenge

Lindsay Farrell, Working Families Organization