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Testimony of Environment Connecticut State Director Chris Phelps
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Energy & Technology Committee

March 5, 2020

RE: ✓ S.B. 10, AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING CLIMATE CHANGE (**Support**)

✓ H.B. 5351, AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN PROGRAMS AND TO INCENTIVIZE AND IMPLEMENT ELECTRIC ENERGY STORAGE RESOURCES (**Support**)

✓ H.B. 5008, AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HIGH PERFORMANCE GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS FOR VOLUNTARY ADOPTION BY MUNICIPALITIES (**Support**)

Senator Needleman, Representative Arconti, Senators Lesser and Formica, Representatives Allie-Brennan and Ferraro, and members of the Energy & Technology Committee, my name is Chris Phelps. I am State Director for Environment Connecticut. I thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments regarding the bills referenced above.

Environment Connecticut is a nonprofit citizen-based environmental advocacy project of Environment America. We work to stop climate change and for a cleaner, greener future for Connecticut and our nation.

S.B. 10, Climate Change

Environment Connecticut **supports** S.B. 10 because it will help Connecticut make significant progress towards achieving its targets for reducing climate-altering pollution and fighting climate change. S.B. 10 will also protect the health of Connecticut's residents by cutting air pollution from tailpipes and power plants.

Section 1 of S.B. 10 authorizes the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection to adopt California's forthcoming Clean Trucks tailpipe emissions standards for medium and light duty vehicles if she determines that those standards are more protective of public health and will produce greater greenhouse gas emissions reductions than the federal government's emissions standards.

In 2004, the General Assembly enacted legislation adopting the California Clean Cars program tailpipe standards for light duty vehicles. Largely as a result of that action, cars and light trucks on Connecticut's roads today emit far less pollution and save drivers significant money at the pump compared to 15 years ago.

In December of 2019, Connecticut joined California and six other states, including all of our New England neighbors, in signing a statement of intent to adopt the California Clean Trucks program. This coordinated regional action to cut tailpipe emissions from medium and heavy trucks will help cut both smog-forming and climate-altering pollution from large trucks on our roads.

Section 2 of S.B. 178 codifies an executive order by Governor Lamont committing Connecticut to getting 100% of its electricity zero carbon sources by 2040. By taking this step, Connecticut will join ten other states from California to Maine, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico that have made Commitments to eliminate climate-altering pollution from electric generation. This is one of the most important steps Connecticut can take to combat climate change. However, we wish to respectfully suggest that the committee amend the language of Section 2 to prioritize carbon-free Class I renewable electric generation sources and establishing an interim zero carbon renewable generation requirement of 40% by 2030. This would mirror the approach that other states, such as New Jersey and New York, have taken with their own 100% clean energy commitments.

Specifically, we suggest making the following change at line 41 of the bill:

(1) Not later than January 1, 2020, to a level at least ten per cent below the level emitted in 1990;

(2) Not later than January 1, 2030, to a level at least forty-five per cent below the level emitted in 2001[;] and that achieves no less than 40 per cent zero-emission Class I renewable electric generation serving electric usage in the state;

(3) Not later than January 1, 2040, to a level of zero per cent from electric generation serving electric usage in the state;

Section 3 of S.B. 10 authorizes the Commissioner to procure up to 300,000 megawatt hours of battery storage and efficiency resources. Measures such as this, particularly significant use of battery storage, will play a critical role in ensuring that Connecticut can meet or exceed Governor Lamont's commitment to quickly transitioning to 100% clean electricity.

H.B. 5351, Energy Storage

Environment Connecticut supports H.B. 5351 because large-scale deployment of battery storage technology will enable rapid transition to a 100% clean and renewable energy in Connecticut.

H.B. 5351 calls for deployment of 1,000 megawatts of electric energy storage by 2030. We urge the committee to require that programs established by this legislation include both residential and Commercial & Industrial customers.

H.B. 5008, Stretch Building Codes

Environment Connecticut supports H.B. 5008 because allowing municipalities to adopt stretch building codes that require better energy performance is a proven method of reducing energy use and pollution from buildings. This is another important step Connecticut can take to meet its commitment to cutting climate-altering pollution.

Our neighboring states of Massachusetts, New York, and Rhode Island have all adopted similar stretch code policies. Connecticut should adopt H.B. 5008 to join its neighbors in realizing the economic and climate benefits of higher performance, energy efficient buildings.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony in support of these bills.

Sincerely,

Chris Phelps
State Director
Environment Connecticut
56 Arbor Street, #213
Hartford, CT 06106