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Honorable Members of the Environment Committee:

My name is Susan Pronovost, and I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut Greenhouse Growers Association (“CGGA”). The CGGA, represents the interests of 200 greenhouse growers, field crop farmers, and food processors in Connecticut.

On behalf of the CGGA, I would like to take this opportunity to voice our support and proposed concept expansion to the *Governor’s Bill No. 6441 An Act Concerning Climate Change Adaptation*. This piece of legislation seeks to address adaptations to climate change, and increased climate resiliency across many industries.

We are pleased to see that agriculture is being addressed in this important piece of legislation as a qualified clean energy source, but we would also like to see all agricultural producers (both for-profit and non-profit) be clearly defined within the language of the bill. Specifically, Section 19 (2)(B) enables the Connecticut Green Bank to determine “*such others*” in the category financial support of potential environmental infrastructure projects. It is a broad term that is dependent upon interpretation.

Agricultural producers – most especially – greenhouse growers - are industry leaders in the utilization of cutting-edge technologies for the conservation of natural resources. Our members are also industry leaders in the use of renewable forms of energy to provide heat and lighting of our states’ largest production and processing facilities. These commercial growers substantially contribute to Connecticut’s economy because they export millions of dollars of plant products to big box stores in the lower 48 states, and they employ thousands of workers. Production of quality plants to meet the national needs of big box chains requires the utilization of technology to enhance our growers’ engagement in a highly competitive domestic and

foreign-influenced marketplace. Renewable energy and environmental infrastructure are essential elements to the economic success of the green industry.

Commercial greenhouse growers are utilizing solar, hydrothermal, and biomass fuels in increasing numbers. Most of these improvements are capital investments that have been made from their businesses. Some of our commercial growers are dedicating greenhouse space for the production of food crops during the winter months. Normally bedding plants, annuals, and perennials would be propagated in these spaces. No one need look further than the recent climate plight of the State of Texas and what happened to its agricultural production and economy during the recent freeze and succession of storms. Our members are preparing for that type of scenario and are seeking to expand production capacity of food crops and food processing that will be fueled by renewable energy.

Finally, we would ask that the language contained in Section 19(4) that defines “*Environmental Infrastructure*” be clarified to include energy efficient lighting – especially when powered by green or renewable energy – as part of the facilities mentioned in that section. The language citing “*structures, facilities, systems, services, and improvement projects....*” can be subject to interpretation.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our comments to support the language and intent of Governor’s Bill 6441. As always, the CGGA stands ready to provide expert testimony on this and other agricultural matters if called upon.

Sincerely,



Susan G. Pronovost
Executive Director