

To: Honorable Co-Chairs Sen. Christine Cohen and Rep. Joseph Gresko, and Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee  
From: Grace Cassineri

My name is Grace Cassineri. I'm 16 years old, a high school junior at The Williams School in New London, a resident of Old Lyme, Connecticut, and I am submitting testimony in favor of HB 6551.

The question often arises; 'when will climate change happen?' In reality, this question is flawed. What people actually mean is, 'when will climate change affect me?' The climate crisis has already impacted hundreds of thousands of people around the world, largely in underprivileged communities, where need is greatest but resources are lacking. In fact, it is 'happening' right here in Connecticut. I speak from a place of great privilege, living in the coastal town of Old Lyme, where our air is clean and our water is clear. But this is not the same story for children just like me, living in other parts of the state. However, their voices are often overlooked and ignored. We need to uplift their voices and listen to them. Climate change *is* real and climate change *is* dangerous, and climate change is happening right now in our state. This working group needs to be diverse, open-minded and understanding of the immediate threat that is brought by the climate crisis. This is crucial in order to keep the children of Connecticut healthy and safe from the dangers of the climate crisis. Climate justice is racial justice, climate justice is economic justice, climate justice is gender justice. The climate crisis demands immediate and drastic measures to be made in order to heal these wounds and save our planet. Let Connecticut be a leader in the fight for climate justice.

Please vote yes on HB 6551, and support the fights against the climate crisis, as well as the fights against economic, racial and gender injustices.

Thank you for your consideration.