

Testimony in support of SB 6551

To: Honored Chairs Sen. Cohen and Rep. Gresko, Vice Chairs Sen. Slap and Rep. Palm, Ranking Members Sen. Miner and Rep. Harding, Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee

Thank you for the privilege of testifying to the importance of SB 6551

Although Connecticut is a nationwide leader in the fight against climate change, the state has not done enough to address environmental inequities. Low-income and communities of color in Hartford, Waterbury, New Haven, Stamford, and Bridgeport are disproportionately affected by climate change, pollution, and other environmental threats. HB 6551 would help prevent further environmental harm to these communities due poor air quality and other environmental degradation.

HB 6551 works in conjunction with Connecticut's environmental justice law to prevent further "affecting facilities" (power plants, sewage treatment plants, waste incinerators, and landfills) from being placed near low-income and minority communities. Just this week the Connecticut General Assembly passed HB 6514 to incentivize construction of new, highly polluting data centers to be built in Connecticut.

As we're trying to reach a 100% clean energy goal in the state, it is critical that data centers meet standards that will mitigate energy use.

Please amend the bill to:

- Prohibit diesel or fossil fuel back-up power to protect environmental justice communities.
- Require the most energy-efficient servers
- Require that construction of data centers meet a net-zero, all-electric standard
- Require that data centers conserve water by requiring air cooled or closed loop water systems
- Require buildings be heated with waste heat from the data center, and allow excess heat to be used for thermal energy storage and or community heating needs
- Require data centers to meet sustainability goals of the municipality in which they are located.

I urge the committee to SUPPORT HB 6551 to ensure that Connecticut receives clean, non-polluting energy that protects the public health of our most vulnerable populations, as well as meaningful reduction of the state's greenhouse gas emissions. Thank you for considering these recommendations to strengthen this legislation.

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