

Energy and Technology Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5200

Title: AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY HYDROGEN POWER.

Vote Date: 3/22/2022

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/3/2022

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

[Rep. David Arconti, 109th Dist.](#)

[Rep. Joseph P. Gresko, 121st Dist.](#)

[Rep. Holly H. Cheeseman, 37th Dist.](#)

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would require a task force to be created with the purpose of studying hydrogen-fuel energy in relation to the state power grid and the state's economy. This task force would be made up by a number of relevant stakeholders in this matter including representation from DEEP, PURA, CT Green Bank, and other state actors involved in hydrogen and energy related matters. Their report would be due to the committee no later than January 15th 2023.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Marissa P. Gillett, Chairman-Public Utilities Regulatory Authority-Supports the bill because it establishes a task force to ensure that Connecticut is appropriately positioned to take advantage of the potential opportunities of hydrogen-fueled energy. PURA recommends that a second, longer-term report be developed by the task force, or another group or agency, and delivered to the committee in January 2025

Commissioner Katie S. Dykes-Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection-Support

John D. Blair, Associate Counsel Connecticut Business and Industry Association-Supports the bill because the task force and its study would help the state determine the best use of clean hydrogen production

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Roger Kuhns, PhD, CT State Coordinator for Citizens' Climate Lobby-Support with additions and clarifications

Mary Louise Nuara State Policy Director – New England, Dominion Energy-Support

Vincent P. Pace, Assistant General Counsel for Eversource-Supports the bill because it advances the study and evaluation of potential opportunities to leverage hydrogen-fueled energy technologies.

Ugur Pasaogullari, Professor of Mechanical Engineering; Director, Center for Clean Energy Engineering-Supports the bill because we are convinced that hydrogen is the way to secure Connecticut's energy future beyond carbon-based fuels.

Derek Phelps, Director of Government Relations at FuelCell Energy, Inc.-Support
Francis Pullaro, Executive Director of RENEW Northeast-Supports the bill with the following changes: amend Section 1 to require the task force to consider how hydrogen can be used in conformity with the Connecticut Global Warming Solutions Act

Franklyn Reynolds, President and CEO of UIL Holdings Corporation-Support

Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology, University of Connecticut and Connecticut Hydrogen Fuel Cell Coalition-Support

David Giordano, Government Relations & Business Development HyAxiom, Inc.-Support

Bloom Energy-Support

The Green Bank Supports the bill with some slight modifications:

- **Create Task Force** – establish a task force to study hydrogen-fueled energy in the state's economy and energy infrastructure, including, but not limited to review of regulations and legislation to achieve economies of scale for the hydrogen ecosystem in the state and recommendations for potential end uses of hydrogen-fueled energy.
- **Composition of Task Force** – designates a fifteen (15) member task force, including the Green Bank as the Chair of the task force. The Green Bank would appoint various members to the task force (e.g., electric and gas distribution company representation, building trades, environmental organization).
- **Report** – the task force will submit a report no later than January 15, 2023 on its findings and recommendations to the Committee.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Shannon Laun Staff Attorney Conservation Law Foundation-Opposes the bill because Hydrogen is not a viable pathway to decarbonization in the near-term because over 99% of hydrogen is currently produced from fossil fuels and is harmful to the climate, high costs and safety concerns associated with hydrogen, the inability to utilize hydrogen in existing gas infrastructure and appliances, and the nascent state of hydrogen research and development.

Cary Lynch, Climate and Policy Manager, The Nature Conservancy-Opposes the bill due to several concerns about this bill as it is written:

- The representation of the task force
- Timing of a report
- Rational for such a task force and report

Amy McLean, Connecticut Director & Senior Policy Advocate-Acadia Center-Oppose

Chris Phelps, State Director, Environment Connecticut-Opposes the bill because almost all hydrogen currently used for energy generation is derived from methane gas and other fossil fuels. As such, any serious study of the future role of hydrogen in our energy mix should focus on hydrogen derived from 100% renewable energy sources. An additional concern with HB 5200 is that the composition of the proposed task force almost entirely consists of hydrogen and other energy industry interests, with just a single member representing environmental advocacy organizations and no representatives speaking to consumer or other public interest concerns.

Tom Swan, Executive Director of the Connecticut Citizen Action Group-Oppose

David Godbout-Oppose

Samantha Dynowski, State Director Sierra Club Connecticut-Opposes the bill because in reality, many hydrogen projects will only lock us into continued fossil fuel use and additional investments in fossil fuel infrastructure. Currently, more than 99 percent of the United States's annual supply of hydrogen, about 10 million metric tons, comes almost entirely from fossil fuels

Reported by: Jason Snukis

Date: March 24, 2022