
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 6397 (as amended by House "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING ZERO-CARBON EMISSIONS.

SUMMARY

This bill states that Connecticut declares a climate crisis to (1) show the urgency for enacting meaningful climate legislation and (2) support increased efforts to secure federal funds to respond to the crisis.

The bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) commissioner, by January 1, 2025, and within available appropriations, to produce a comprehensive Connecticut Decarbonization Roadmap identifying the regulations, policies, and programs needed to meet the state's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction targets (see BACKGROUND). The commissioner must convene stakeholder meetings when developing the roadmap.

Under the bill, after the decarbonization roadmap is completed, the commissioner must submit it to the Environment Committee. The roadmap is implemented if both chambers approve it. However, the bill specifies that a decision not to approve it does not affect any state agency's ability to implement an action that is otherwise within its authority.

*House Amendment "A" replaces the underlying bill, which declared a climate emergency and imposed requirements on various state agencies to address it, including one for DEEP to produce a decarbonization roadmap.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

CLIMATE CRISIS DECLARATION

The bill states that Connecticut recognizes the need and urgency to mitigate climate impacts and prepare for and manage disaster risk from

climate change. It states that the climate crisis threatens (1) the resilience of communities in the state, regardless of zip code; (2) multiple aspects of the state's natural resources and infrastructure assets; (3) the state's economy; and (4) the quality of life for the state's younger generations.

The bill states that it is thusly urgent to (1) significantly and rapidly decrease GHG emissions and (2) increase community coping capacities to handle climate change impacts. It also specifies that this declaration does not authorize the governor to operate the state through executive order.

DECARBONIZATION ROADMAP

Content

Under the bill, the decarbonization roadmap must at least identify the following:

1. interim and sector-specific targets to help in the planning process, which the DEEP commissioner must (a) review at least every five years and (b) update as needed to meet the GHG emissions reduction targets;
2. available federal funds to help local businesses, schools, and municipalities reduce carbon emissions;
3. estimated carbon emissions reductions of proposed policies, including the proportion of necessary reductions that each recommended policy achieves;
4. a timeline for implementing the recommended actions;
5. each entity responsible for implementing the policy; and
6. the estimated net value of the benefits of implementing the proposed policies, including the energy cost savings and economic benefits.

The bill requires the roadmap to (1) ensure the state meets the Global Warming Solutions Act's relevant timelines and deadlines and (2) include tangible actions to meet the GHG emissions reduction targets

(see BACKGROUND). It allows the roadmap to include any information and recommendations from existing planning materials relevant to achieving the reduction targets such as the following: the Governor's Council on Climate Change reports and the state's Comprehensive Energy Strategy, GHG Emissions Inventory Report, and Integrated Resources Plan.

Stakeholder Meetings

The bill requires the DEEP commissioner to convene stakeholder meetings involving potentially impacted parties when developing the decarbonization roadmap. The meetings must at least include representatives from the following entities:

1. utilities and municipal utilities;
2. residential, commercial, and industrial heating and cooling companies, as well as industrial and manufacturing and natural gas distribution and service companies;
3. air transportation providers, bus transportation services and companies, transportation and home-heating fuels services, and trucking and rail service companies;
4. solid waste and recycling providers;
5. realtors and commercial and residential builders;
6. waste-to-energy and nuclear generating facilities;
7. statewide business organizations;
8. municipalities;
9. schools and places of higher education;
10. environmental groups and natural and working lands organizations; and
11. Connecticut residents.

BACKGROUND

GHG Emissions Reduction Targets

By law, the Global Warming Solutions Act requires the state to reduce GHG emissions from all sources to a level at least (1) 10% below 1990 emission levels by January 1, 2020; (2) 45% below 2001 emission levels by January 1, 2030; and (3) 80% below 2001 emission levels by January 1, 2050. It also requires the state to reduce GHG emissions from electricity supplied to electric customers in the state to 0% by January 1, 2040. Every three years, the DEEP commissioner must report to the Environment, Energy and Technology, and Transportation committees on the quantifiable reductions achieved to meet the GHG emission reduction targets (CGS § 22a-200a).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 26 Nay 7 (03/10/2023)

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 12 Nay 6 (04/19/2023)