

# Energy and Technology Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-5444

**Title:** AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TEST BED TECHNOLOGIES PROGRAM.

**Vote Date:** 3/21/2024

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 3/14/2024

**File No.:**

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## SPONSORS OF BILL: ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

### REASONS FOR BILL:

The state of Connecticut may be able to speed up the piloting of new technological projects if this legislation were enacted. Through establishing a test bed technologies program, the state may be able to be more efficient and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This bill provides the opportunity to expand on Connecticut's technology programs, and analyze their efficacy, which could be beneficial for future use. By requiring state agency commissioners to create test programs, discoveries can be made as to whether new technologies can improve the state's economy and environment.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

**Jeffrey Beckham, Secretary, Office of Policy and Management (OPM) & Michelle Gilman, Commissioner, Department of Administrative Services (DAS):** On behalf of OPM and DAS, Mr. Beckham and Commissioner Gilman are opposed of the bill because it creates significant administrative mandates to OPM, DAS, and other state agencies. H.B. 5444 would undermine and erode the competitive procurement processes. It would encourage vendors to solicit their goods and services to every agency which is a counter to CT's procurement policies that gives a level playing field.

### NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

**Aziz Dehkan, Executive Director & Allison Pilcher, Policy Director, Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs (CRCJ):** Supports H.B. 5444 because it is believed that such projects can not only reduce state operating costs to the benefits of taxpayers but can also demonstrate the success of innovative sustainable technologies that could be implemented more widely to support an economy-wide transition to clean energy.

**Robert Silverberg, Managing Partner, Morris London**: Mr. Silverberg is in support of the bill because the purpose of Test Bed Legislation is to expedite the process in which proprietary emerging technologies could be piloted at no cost or liability to the state and be procured via sole source – performance-based contracting. Moreover, Mr. Silverberg states: H.B. 5444 is a continued example of this kind of ingenuity by expanding the program to all forms of engineering.

**Michael Vigeant, Chief Operating Officer, Great Blue Research Inc.**: Mr. Vigeant is in favor of the bill and goes on to talk about the Feasibility Assessment section of the legislation.

**Changes Recommended:**

The market research firm performing this assessment should be selected by the applicant from a DAS vendor list. If no list exists for Market Research firms, then one should be made.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Ned Lamont, Governor, State of Connecticut**: Governor Lamont is in opposition of the bill because it is nearly identical to last year's H.B. 6496 which he returned to the General Assembly unsigned. The concerns that were raised in last year's veto message remain addressed with this year's version. C.G.S. 32-39e has established a pilot program to promote CT based businesses to address an agency's identified need. OPM and DAS in co-op with Connecticut Innovations have launched numerous pilots which include six in the past year.

**Daniel O'Keefe, Commissioner Designate, Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) & Matt McCooe, CEO, Connecticut Innovations**: Mr. O'Keefe and Mr. McCooe are in opposition of the bill because it would give an opportunity to out of state companies to take part in a duplicative program at an advantage compared to the existing program. In contrary, to focusing on the Governor's Innovation Lab on giving support to CT businesses that could address an agency's identified need.

**Reported by:**  
**Francisco Munoz and Abigail Lockwood**

**Date: 3/26/2024**