CLIMATE & CLEAN ENERGY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES 2019

Acadia Center • Connecticut Audubon Society • Center for Energy Security Solutions • Connecticut Citizen Action Group • Citizens Campaign for the Environment • Clean Water Action • Connecticut Fund for the Environment • Connecticut League of Conservation Voters • ConnPIRG • Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs • Connecticut Sustainable Business Council • Consumers for Sensible Energy • Eastern CT Green Action • Environment Connecticut • Northeast Clean Energy Council • Peoples Action for Clean Energy • Portland Clean Energy Task Force • Renew Northeast • Save the Sound • Sierra Club • The Nature Conservancy • 350 CT • Vote Solar

The evidence is mounting. Recent international (IPCC) and federal (NCA4) assessments warn that we're on a global warming trajectory toward catastrophic impacts on our human health and our environment. The NCA4 Report released by 13 federal agencies in November documented that climate change is already causing more frequent and severe weather across the U.S, and the country is poised to suffer massive damage to transportation, infrastructure, and our environment, health and economy if global warming is allowed to continue.

Connecticut has already felt these impacts, with Superstorms Irene and Sandy and coastal infrastructure challenges due to rising sea levels, as well as spreading mosquito and tick-born illnesses, and increased health risks to children, the elderly, and in low-income communities.

Still facing a massive budget deficit, Connecticut needs to strengthen its economy through generation of revenue and well-paying jobs. State leaders also need to address the extreme and growing income inequality in Connecticut, and the disproportionate impacts that low-income communities and communities of color suffer from air pollution generated from the combustion of fuels for electricity generation and for heating our buildings and homes, and inadequate access to clean energy and energy efficiency programs.

The good news? A policy framework that will drive transformative change towards climate action and a clean energy economy will also allow us to tackle our state's lagging economic growth and the growing equity gap. The solutions needed to combat climate change will help save money and grow jobs, stabilize our energy grid, while helping Connecticut out of its ailing budget problems.

There are three main strategies to climate action that Connecticut legislators can take in 2019 to help ensure we meet our 2020 and 2030 mandates.

- First, support economic growth in Connecticut through smart budget decisions that will protect and bolster strategic investments in energy efficiency and clean energy. Returning the $145 million in efficiency funds taken for deficit reduction should be a priority.
- Second, drastically and rapidly cut fossil fuel use in order to meet both our 2020 and 2030 GHG-reduction mandates. This requires increasing energy efficiency investments in our aging buildings and homes and ensuring equal access to all measures that reduce energy waste, deploying all measures that reduce energy waste, lower our electric and natural gas consumption, since the cheapest and cleanest energy is the energy you don't use. It also requires slashing emissions from transportation by electrifying our cars, buses and trucks, and reducing reliance on natural gas to heat our buildings. Putting a fair price on carbon that accurately reflects its environmental and health costs will help discourage use of fossil fuels and reduce our emissions faster.

- Third, ramp up renewable resources, including both cost-effective offshore wind and local, distributed solar that makes our grid more resilient. While putting more renewables online quickly, we should continue to strengthen renewable mandates and empower cities and towns to make smarter, cleaner energy choices.

I. SMART BUDGET DECISIONS TO PROTECT & EXPAND SMART INVESTMENTS IN ENERGY EFFICIENCY & CLEAN ENERGY

ISSUE: Energy efficiency and Green Bank funds are generated by a small charge on electric and natural gas bills, some revenue from RGGI auctions, and from efficiency's value to the grid from energy savings. These programs consistently lower our energy demand statewide and reduce electricity bills for businesses and citizens, while helping the state meet climate change goals. Additionally these funds create tens of thousands of jobs in our state: DOE estimated in 2017 the generation of approximately 34 thousand both direct and indirect jobs from the installation and the energy savings. The C&LM programs educate and train our clean energy workforce, and provide weatherization services to homes that result in lowered peak demand and lowered direct energy costs in homes and businesses across Connecticut. C&LM ratepayer funded programs have a 1 to 7 return on investment, and have consistently lowered our state's energy demand. They generate over $140 million dollars annually in taxes, and 1.4 billion gross state product (GSP) each year. Yet despite these myriad economic and environmental benefits, the Connecticut General Assembly raided $63.5 million from the Energy Conservation and Load Management Fund (CT Energy Efficiency Fund); $14 million from CT Clean Energy Fund (Green Bank), and $10 million from RGGI auction proceeds (some of which goes to the Energy Efficiency Fund and Green Bank) from budget years 2018 and 2019 (totaling $127 million from CT Energy Fund and $28 million from the Green Bank; and $20 million from RGGI). During the 2018 legislative session, $10 million from the CT Energy Efficiency Fund were restored, but thousands of jobs have already been lost due to these fund diversions

SOLUTION: Energy efficiency and clean energy investments are critical to Connecticut's fiscal and environmental health. The legislature should act in two distinct ways. First, through the budget process, 2018 funds already diverted and transferred must be restored; the transfer of funds slated for 2019 should be stopped; and the 2020-21 budget should fully restore funding to pre-raid levels. Second, through the legislative process, we must protect the Energy Efficiency, Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, and Green Bank funds from future diversions through changes in legislation that would create contractual rights for ratepayers and protect funds from being diverted for uses other than energy efficiency and clean energy.

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II. CUTTING FOSSIL FUELS TO PROTECT OUR CLIMATE

CUTTING TRANSPORTATION EMISSIONS THROUGH ZERO EMISSION VEHICLES (ZEVS) AND ZERO EMISSION BUSSES (BEVS)

ISSUE: Transportation currently accounts for 38% of Connecticut's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and is the largest single source of other air pollutants in the country and is an obstacle to improving CT's air quality. Helping CT residents, especially those residents most-impacted by pollution, transition to cars and public transit that do not rely on dirty fuels is critical to stopping further damage to the climate and creating healthier communities. Electrification is also good for CT's economy, energy independence, and residents, who can free themselves from expensive gasoline purchases. But Connecticut has a long way to go before coming close to putting the approximately 500,000 ZEVs on the road by 2030 needed in order to meet the mandate in Public Act 18-80 to reduce economy-wide GHG-emissions 45% from 2001 levels by 2030.[1]

SOLUTIONS: **Key Policies to Boost ZEV and BEV Use in Connecticut, including:**

- **ZEV State Fleet Mandates:** State and local governments should be leading by example in purchasing clean vehicle fleets to combat climate change. The state should require DAS, DOT, and DEEP to purchase zero emission vehicles, so that the state's light duty fleet includes at least 50% ZEVs and 30% of the state's transit buses are ZEBs by 2030, with a goal of electrifying the vehicles most extensively used to support cost-effective investments.

- **Future Proofing Buildings with EV–Ready Building Codes:** EV-ready building codes, which require new construction and buildings undergoing substantial rehabilitation and retrofitting to include electrical infrastructure to support EV charging stations, are critical to supporting the charging needs of the growing EV market
  - EV-ready building codes reduce costs for consumers. Installing electrical infrastructure during construction instead of retrofitting later has a minimal impact on construction costs, but studies show that the installation cost of a charging station in an EV-ready building can be 64-75% less expensive.
  - Connecticut needs to update the state building code to require that new construction include ready spaces in single-family, multi-unit, and commercial buildings.

- **Incentivizing Consumers to go Electric.** Despite the long-term cost savings that result from buying an EV, initial sales prices often deter consumers from choosing EVs. Consumer purchase incentives are critical to overcoming this barrier and ensuring widespread EV deployment. The Connecticut Hydrogen and Electric Automobile Purchase Rebate (CHEAPR) offers Connecticut residents rebates up to $5,000 when purchasing or leasing certain eligible battery electric, plug-in hybrid electric or fuel cell electric vehicles. This program has supported EV purchases, but available funding is diminishing quickly, and incentive levels were recently reduced due to vanishing funds. Connecticut needs to:
  - Institutionalize this rebate program to guarantee at least $2 million annually through at least 2025 in order to give buyers security that funding will be available when choosing their next vehicle.
  - Design incentives to equitably increase access to EVs for communities that suffer disproportionately from health impacts of air pollution. In order to make EVs a reality for all, CT needs an income eligible program that offers bigger rebates and used-car rebates for customers in lower income brackets.

[1] Governor's Council on Climate Change, *Building a Low Carbon Future for Connecticut: Achieving a 45% GHG Reduction by 2030* (released Dec. 18, 2018), at 28, available at https://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/climatechange/publications/building_a_low_carbon_future_for_ct_gc3_recommendations.pdf

- **Allowing electric vehicle manufacturers to sell cars directly to in-state consumers.** Moving to a passenger fleet of ZEVs will improve health of Connecticut's residents and help the state meet climate change obligations**,** but to do this the state must remove parts of an old law that prohibits the direct sale of ZEVs/EVs. In addition to helping Connecticut meet GHG emission targets, allowing direct sales of EVs could help improve Connecticut's economy: each ZEV/EV center could create 10-25 new jobs and provide up to $2 million in new sales tax, $3 million in direct economic benefits, and $5 million in indirect economic benefits. An Acadia Center study shows that there has been no negative impact on car dealership employment levels in states that allow the direct sales of EVs to consumers.[2]

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INCREASING ENERGY EFFICIENCY TARGETS & STATE BUILDINGS PROGRAM

ISSUE: Connecticut has award winning C&LM ratepayer funded energy efficiency programs, but they are not utilized to maximize savings on electric bills and from avoided costs of GHG-emissions. P.A. 18-50 makes it the state's policy to annually reduce energy consumption by at least 1.6 million MMBtus from 2020 through 2025. While having energy efficiency targets in statute is helpful, they should be strengthened. Similarly, CT state government facilities account for 15-20% of the electricity and natural gas consumed by the state's commercial and industrial sector, which costs the state about $80 million annually. Implementing efficiency measures could reduce costs by 30%, or about $24 million annually, saving taxpayers money and reducing emissions.[3]

SOLUTION: Require Connecticut to achieve all cost effective energy efficiency, similar to Massachusetts and Rhode Island, states that have similar electric rates, but have lower bills because of higher efficiency investments. With respect to state buildings, the existing Lead by Example program should be improved with strengthened targets and predictable funding to foster in-state job creation and economic development while reducing the state's substantial energy costs, increasing budgetary savings for taxpayers, and improving the energy efficiency and weatherization of state facilities.

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[2]Acadia Center, Direct Sales of Electric Vehicles in Connecticut: Assessment of Employment Impacts at Existing Car Dealerships, May 17, 2017. https://acadiacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Acadia-Center_EV-Direct-Sales-Analysis_20170517.pdf.
[3] DEEP, Leading By Example: Improving Energy Management at State Facilities, 2018, page 3, available at https://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/energy/lbe/LBE_LegReport_2018.pdf.

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NATURAL GAS POLLUTION, SAFETY & INFRASTRUCTURE

ISSUE: "Natural" or shale gas contributes to Connecticut's greenhouse gas emissions and is dangerous to our environment and our communities. Despite greenhouse gas reduction goals, and an increase in power produced from renewable sources, several Connecticut policies continue to encourage gas expansion and allow methane leaks. A 2015 law requiring ratepayers to foot the bill for future gas expansion projects is still on the books; converting 300,000 customers to shale gas continues under the gas expansion plan; state law allows utilities to leak up to 3% of gas from pipelines causing public safety concerns in addition to climate and environmental damage. According to Synapse Energy Economics, much more than 3% of gas is actually leaking.

SOLUTIONS: Proposed legislation would fix these problems by protecting utility customers from being forced to subsidize the cost of interstate gas pipeline construction and customer conversions, halting expansion of gas infrastructure and requiring utilities to conduct regular monitoring and mitigation of pipelines leaking greater than 1%, and assist communities to prepare for gas-related emergencies, and regulate oil and gas waste. PURA should also establish performance incentives for reducing gas leaks.

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CARBON PRICING

PROBLEM: Strategically decarbonizing all sectors of our economy is essential to stopping the harmful impacts of climate change. Carbon pollution -- from burning fossil fuels -- results in externalities that are borne by society today, and in the future. The external, compounding social costs from carbon pollution include degraded public health, particularly of children, the elderly, people of color and the low-income community, the economy and the environment. It is also bad for Connecticut's business sector that is at risk of losing competitive advantage over businesses around the nation and world that are already accounting for carbon pollution by establishing an internal price per tonne.

SOLUTION: Attaching a price to carbon to account for all its pollution costs will encourage innovation to reduce carbon emissions and help Connecticut meet its GWSA targets. Pricing carbon is one of the most effective ways to help accelerate our transition away from dirty fossil fuels toward renewable energy. The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a form of carbon pricing, has effectively lowered carbon in the electric sector without raising electricity prices and while generating economic benefits for the state. RGGI should be left in place to control the power sector carbon emissions. Similarly, the announcement in December by Connecticut and neighboring states, that they will move forward as a region to reduce transportation emissions

and invest in modern, clean transportation solutions, can address that sector. In the meantime, Connecticut can lead and work with other nearby states by enacting a regional statewide carbon pricing plan that aligns with RGGI and Transportation Climate Initiative (TCI), and also covers other sectors like industrial and heating fuels. Connecticut should also lead by example by enacting an internal carbon pricing mechanism that would provide incentives for state agencies to continue to reduce carbon emissions. Carbon pricing revenue should be reinvested in clean energy and energy efficiency programs that further reduce carbon emissions, climate adaptation, and environmental justice communities most affected by pollution, as well as provide assistance to workers affected by the transition away from fossil fuels.

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III. INCREASE RENEWABLES TO BUILD A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

OFFSHORE WIND EXPANSION

PROBLEM: The Northeast needs at least 6400 MW of offshore wind by 2030[4] to be on track to meet an 80% GHG reduction by 2050. While Connecticut has taken small steps to procure this resource through existing authority, it has not pursued the large-scale development necessary to meet its ambitious climate goals. Further, in contrast to neighboring states that have made robust long-term commitments to offshore wind, Connecticut lacks a strategy to expand this important clean energy resource.

SOLUTION: Authorize Connecticut to solicit competitive bids for responsibly developed offshore wind, separate from other renewable and zero-carbon resources, and mandate procurements for no less than 30% of the state's electricity needs by 2030. As part of the mandate, the legislature should require that offshore wind proposals describe plans for using skilled labor and apprenticeship programs registered in Connecticut to ensure that the economic benefits of offshore wind development accrue to Connecticut. To facilitate timely buildout of offshore wind and provide market certainty for developers, the legislature should also establish a solicitation schedule, with a minimum solicitation size of 400 MW.

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[4] Acadia Center, EnergyVision 2030, available at http://2030.acadiacenter.org/

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Supporting Local Solar Growth and Fair Compensation for Solar

PROBLEM: Public Act 18-50 eliminated traditional retail-rate net metering after the expiration of RSIP incentive program (probably by end of 2019). Going forward, residential customers will have to choose between a "Buy-all/Credit-all" option that would require consumers to sell all of their self-generated solar energy to the grid; and a new, more restrictive version of net metering that replaces current monthly netting interval with an interval to be determined by PURA that cannot exceed one day. PURA is in the process of setting rates for these tariffs, but the new program will likely make the economics of solar less favorable; make it harder for solar installers to predict the savings/benefits from going solar; and make it more difficult to transition to time-of-use rates and netting and to integrate storage and energy management systems. The new law has created uncertainty for a growing state industry that needs to be healthy and vibrant for the state to meet its climate goals.

SOLUTION: Ensure local, distributed solar continues to grow in Connecticut by amending PA 18-50 to: expand the netting interval for net metering to protect solar consumers' interests and allow for transition to time-of-use netting, which would encourage smart energy use and support grid modernization principles; increase yearly caps for commercial and shared clean energy facilities and improving program rules to deploy more local, clean energy; remove caps on the size of individual projects tied to the electric load of project site; and ensure the full value of distributed solar is reflected in tariff rates.

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DEPLOYING ZERO EMISSION ELECTRIC HEATING

ISSUE: Transitioning from dirty fossil-fuel heat to zero emission heat pumps is crucial to achieve the state's greenhouse gas emission reduction requirements. Heat pumps are commercially available highly efficient electric heating units that can effectively heat homes in sub-zero New England temperatures. Heat pumps also reduce heating costs for many consumers. Despite their benefits, heat pumps face barriers to deployment, such as lack of consumer awareness, an unfamiliar workforce, and high purchase and installation costs.

SOLUTION: Incentivize deployment of heat pumps through the state's energy efficiency programs. Connecticut's energy efficiency programs have already proven their effectiveness in overcoming similar barriers for efficient technologies, such as LED lighting. The programs should be explicitly directed to accelerate the transition away from fossil fuel heat to zero emission heating. Heat pump deployment should also be accelerated by requiring heat pumps in residential new construction.

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RENEWABLE ENERGY PORTFOLIO STANDARD

ISSUE: Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) policies require utilities to purchase an increasing percentage of electric sales from renewables. In 2018, Connecticut's Class I RPS, the state's primary driver of investments in renewables, was expanded to 40% by 2030. Additional RPS increases would advance Connecticut's clean energy development to help ensure that Connecticut's emissions reduction goals under the GWSA are met and to put Connecticut on a path toward 100% renewables.

SOLUTION: Expand the RPS to require electric suppliers to gradually increase the source of energy they supply from Class I renewable energy sources to achieve at least 50% Class I renewable energy sources by 2030, and 100% renewables by at the latest 2045.[5] Stronger RPS targets will add more jobs to Connecticut and New England and reduce reliance on natural gas, which will allow consumers to avoid volatile winter spikes in electricity prices while also eliminating the need for expensive interstate pipeline infrastructure.

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Community Choice Aggregation

ISSUE: Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) is a method by which towns, including their residents and businesses, use the power of community purchasing to choose their electricity provider, which can result in cleaner, cheaper electricity for the town's ratepayers, as compared to the utility's standard offering. For example, Newton, MA recently signed a contract where ratepayers will purchase 60% of their electricity from renewable sources (46% more than the current utility standard offering), while at the same time reducing their cost by about $0.02/kwh. Power continues to be delivered by the existing utility and any ratepayer is free to opt out. CCA is not currently authorized in Connecticut, though there is a provision that allows individual electric customers to choose their electricity provider. All of our neighboring states allow for CCA including Massachusetts, New York, and Rhode Island, as well as Ohio, California, Illinois, and New Jersey. Each state does CCA differently, with California being most advanced in how it allows aggregation entities to

[5] Some of the undersigned organizations support more accelerated timelines for our renewable energy, including mandating 100% renewables by as early as 2035.

develop their own local renewable energy and energy efficiency projects. For more on the different state policies, see the Local Energy Aggregation Network.

SOLUTION: Connecticut should allow CCA so that a town's residents and businesses can join together into power purchasing entities that can increase the mix of renewable energy used by the town (with opt out provisions), while reducing energy costs. CCA requires no state or ratepayer funds, a real benefit in our current fiscal situation. A more advanced form of CCA, sometimes called CCA 2.0, would allow aggregation units to develop their own renewable energy and energy efficiency projects. CCA can be a powerful tool for CT to reach its climate action goals by allowing communities to make energy decisions for which they are uniquely positioned.

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Engaging and Empowering Green Communities

ISSUE: Connecticut cannot meet its GHG-reduction targets and renewables mandates without local government action. Connecticut towns need to be active participants in lowering energy demand and adopting renewable power.

SOLUTION: We will propose modifications to the statute which mandates the POCD. These changes will require that municipalities incorporate state requirements and goals for GHG reduction, energy efficiency, adoption of EVs, and procurement of renewable power.

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