



Interreligious
Eco-Justice Network

SB 1560: AN ACT CONCERNING CONNECTICUT'S ECONOMY, ELECTRICITY
AFFORDABILITY AND BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS AND ESTABLISHING THE
CONNECTICUT ENERGY PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY AND THE GREEN BOND FUND.

Dear Senator Fonfara, Representative Horn, and esteemed members of the Finance,
Revenue, and Bonding Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **opposition** to *SB 1560, An Act Concerning Connecticut's Economy, Electricity Affordability and Business Competitiveness and Establishing the Connecticut Energy Procurement Authority and the Green Bond Fund*.

The Interreligious Eco-Justice Network is a faith-based environmental organization that works with religious communities across Connecticut on environmental issues, such as climate change, toxic pollution, and biodiversity loss. IREJN has worked with hundreds of congregations that have implemented energy efficiency measures, installed heat pumps, and installed solar.

IREJN is opposed to the bill's provisions that would eliminate the Systems Benefit Charge, which provides funding for the energy efficiency and clean energy programs that have helped houses of worship, businesses, and residents reduce energy consumption and transition to clean energy. These programs reduce energy costs, improve our air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and employ more than 34,000 Connecticut residents. The bill proposes replacing the Systems Benefit Charge with bonding through a new bond fund, which will require funding to be approved on an annual basis. Not only will this amount likely fluctuate due to budget constraints, but the programs will be in competition with other worthy programs, which could also lead to reduced funding. Finally, bonding funding will include interest payments, which will make the programs less affordable. Right now, the Systems Benefit Charge is a secure and stable source of funding for these programs; we do not want to see this funding threatened.

IREJN also opposes classifying nuclear as a Class 1 renewable energy source. Doing so will mean that the funds will be diverted to Millstone instead of clean energy sources, such as solar. It will also mean less funding for renewable energy businesses. It is IREJN's view that nuclear is not a clean energy source, due to its hazardous waste.

Finally, IREJN opposes the creation of a quasi-public authority. This effort is duplicative and will result in needless confusion and bureaucracy. PURA already exists for this purpose; another agency will create double work and increased costs.

IREJN recommends expanding and improving upon the programs that we have in place, and supporting the agencies already doing this work.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Very best regards,

Terri Eickel, Executive Director