

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

PA 15-194

HB6838

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Transcripts from the Joint Standing Committee Public
Hearing(s) and/or Senate and House of Representatives
Proceedings

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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2015**

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Will the Clerk please announce the tally?

CLERK:

Senate Bill 1078, as amended by Senate "A," in
concurrence with the Senate

Total Number Voting	137
Necessary for Passage	69
Those voting Yea	126
Those voting Nay	11
Absent and not voting	14

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The bill, as amended, is passed in concurrence
with the Senate. [gavel] Mr. Clerk, will you please
call Calendar 332.

CLERK:

On Page 16, Calendar 332, Favorable Report of
the Joint Standing Committee on Energy and
Technology, House Bill 6838, AN ACT CONCERNING THE
ENCOURAGEMENT OF LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND
ACCESS TO RESIDENTIAL RENEWABLE ENERGY.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Reed, you have the floor.

[cheering]

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SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Reed, you have the floor.

REP. REED (102nd):

Oh, sorry, excuse me, Mr. Speaker. I was hearing oh goody another energy bill, and I couldn't hear you acknowledge me. [laughs] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move for acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The question is on acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill. Will you remark, madam?

REP. REED (102nd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Clerk has in his possession an Amendment LCO 8502. I request that he be asked to call it and that I be allowed to summarize.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Will the Clerk please call LCO 8502, which will be designated House Amendment "A."

CLERK:

House Amendment "A," LCO 8502, as introduced
by Representative Reed, et al.

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SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The gentlewoman has sought leave of the Chamber to summarize. Is there objection? Seeing none, you may proceed with summarization, madam.

REP. REED (102nd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a strike-all amendment that becomes the bill. This amendment is designed to deploy more solar in Connecticut than ever before. To use more in-state investment opportunities to help us meet our mandated renewable energy goal of at least 20 percent renewable energy by 2020. And to reduce the associated costs to ratepayers. I move adoption.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The question before the Chamber is adoption of House Amendment "A." Will you remark?

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of this amendment. Right now, in the State of Connecticut, we've made great strides in providing people for renewable opportunities with residential solar. This just continues the program in a better funding mechanism than we have now, to be quite

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honest with you. The Residential Solar Incentive Program that we call RSIP has been not just meeting the goals that we expected by 2020 but already doubled that goal in the State of Connecticut.

This program now that we're gonna have is gonna be one in which we start to shift the funding away from the ratepayers and more towards an investment base. Our Green Bank will provide the initial dollars that they have accumulated from our systems benefit charge that will continue to be on our bills and will continue to offer opportunities for reducing of energy consumption in the State of Connecticut.

But now it's gonna leverage that bill towards private investment. The EDCs, or electrical distribution companies, will have to do their share of buying those credits up. So the goal here is to start to reduce the incentive program and essentially remove that by the year 2022 that the incentive program from solar is gone. And that it's gonna be a self-sustaining product rather than one that needs the incentives that at times those will say our shift in dollars from the solar people to the other ratepayers that don't have solar.

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So I rise in strong support of this legislation and look forward to the fact that this solar actually becomes a self-sustaining product. We continue - we call that - we call this SHREC so if you're looking at the little green monster that you saw in the cartoons there, that's a way to remember it, but it's Solar Home Renewable Energy Credit Program and a way to actually get the State of Connecticut off of the - off of our ratepayer products. So thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to supporting this legislation.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Thank you, sir. Would you care to remark further on House Amendment "A?" Representative Hoydick.

REP. HOYDICK (120th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, rise in support of this amended bill. It's a great new enhancement to the solar program currently we have for residential homeowners. And in addition, it brings a component that we haven't done collectively in the past, where we allow our municipalities and our Green Bank and our Departments and the industry to work together on

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the permitting process.

So within the next two years, when the federal tax credits expire for green energy, our plan is to have our municipalities have a robust permitting system, more than they even do now, and they're pretty good at what they do. And which will allow people to put solar panels on their house, reduce their energy costs, have some green energy as well, and get it done within the next two years and to save some money and take advantage of incentives.

Mr. Speaker, a few questions to the proponent of the bill, through you, please.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Please proceed, ma'am.

REP. HOYDICK (120th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. One of the issues that we looked at was the 15-year master purchase agreement that the Green Bank was going to contract with the electricity distributions companies. And that was to buy the ZRECs and for the EDCs, CL&P, and UI to keep this on their balance sheet and pay down on these ZRECs. And originally, it was for a 15-year purchase, and it was four or \$5 less than the ACP cost. And I know there have been some

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changes in the bill, and I was quickly going through it, and I was wondering what kind of incentives that benefit the ratepayer changes were made in this bill? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Reed.

REP. REED (102nd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you. Among the things that we did was to make sure that the cost of the SHRECs is gonna be lower than the alternative - the ACP - costs. And - 'cause that's been an issue. And so that's going to make these SHRECs - that's gonna be passed through the ratepayers ultimately. The EDCs are gonna be able to purchase them for less, and if they wanna resell them on the open market, because they're gonna be a really wonderful product. I mean, that's one the things that we've discovered about the Green Bank. I think it's - with the public private financing that they do, I think it's one public dollar for every eight investment dollar and the interest in investing in Green Bank enterprises seems to be growing exponentially.

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So that's one of the things that we changed in order to make it not only attractive but to - we wanna shut down the subsidy system after we achieve the 300 megawatts. And so even though after that's done, and you know, solar will still generating RECs, that obligation will go away and these companies will have matured and won't need the subsidies. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Hoydick.

REP. HOYDICK (120th):

I thank the good Chairwoman for her answer and Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Chairwoman and Senator Doyle, the ranking members Formica and Ackert, for their work on this. Also the Governor's Office because this is the Governor's bill. And I appreciate the Governor allowing the permitting process to be added onto this bill because it makes it a more comprehensive product. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I urge my colleagues' support.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Thank you, madam. Would you care to remark further on House Amendment "A?" If not, let me try

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your minds. All those in favor of House "A," please signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Those opposed, nay. The ayes have it. The amendment is adopted. [gavel] Further on the bill as amended? Further on the bill as amended? If not, staff and guests to the Well of the House and members take your seats. The machine will be opened.

CLERK:

[bell ringing] The House of Representatives is voting by roll. The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Will members please report to the Chamber immediately.

[pause]

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Will the members please check the board to make sure your vote is properly cast. If all the members have voted, and I believe they

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have, the machine will be locked, and the Clerk
will take a tally.

The Clerk please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill 6838, as amended by House "A"

Total Number Voting 139

Necessary for Passage 70

Those voting Yea 129

Those voting Nay 10

Absent and not voting 12

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The bill, as amended, is passed. [gavel] Will
the Clerk please call Calendar No. 591.

CLERK:

On Page 37, Calendar 591, Favorable Report of
the Joint Standing Committee on Planning and
Development, Substitute Senate Bill 865, AN ACT
CONCERNING ALLOWABLE COSTS FOR THE INSTALLATION OF
OVERSIZED WATER MAINS.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Albis.

REP. ALBIS (99th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good evening.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

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and the machine will be open.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Immediate roll call ordered in the Senate.

[pause]

THE CHAIR:

If all members have voted, all members have voted, the machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk, will you call the tally, please.

CLERK:

House Bill 6725

Total Number Voting	36
Necessary for Passage	19
Those voting Yea	36
Those voting Nay	0
Absent/not voting	0

THE CHAIR:

The bill passes. [gavel] Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

On Page 20, Calendar 625, House Bill No. 6838, AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ACCESS TO RESIDENTIAL RENEWABLE ENERGY. It's amended by House Amendment Schedule "A," Favorable Report of the Committee on Energy and Technology.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Linares.

SENATOR LINARES:

Madam President, pursuant to Section 15, I'd like to recuse myself from this vote.

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THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir. We will wait until you leave the Chamber, sir. I knew we'd get him sooner or later. Senator Doyle.

SENATOR DOYLE:

Thank you, Madam President. I guess the Democratic Caucus has increased. Madam President, I move acceptance to the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill in concurrence with the House.

THE CHAIR:

Motion's on acceptance and passage in concurrence. Will you remark, sir?

SENATOR DOYLE:

Yes, Madam President. Before you we have the bill that seeks to increase the Connecticut Green Bank Residential Solar Investment Program. Many are aware we've seen a lot more - our neighbors are increasing the residential solar participation statewide. This is a bill that we had a public hearing on and much interest. So it has generated quite a few jobs statewide.

The goal of this bill to increase it to a cap of 30 megawatts of new solar photovoltaic installations. The end date is 2022. It's a hard cap. And the goal of the legislation - the supporters of the legislation and the Green Bank is by the end of this cap, we will no longer need any more state involvement. And we're hoping the market takes it away and we will not have any further incentives or cost to the State of Connecticut.

This bill creates what they call solar home renewable energy credits or SRECs, which is a funding mechanism that will enable us to provide the funding for these tax credits, which use to result in more residential solar throughout our state. And our electric distribution companies will be required to purchase the SRECs from the Green Bank. But what it really is their purchases help them to meet the renewable energy

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goals to get the green energy in the state of Connecticut.

A lot of current - a lot of the acquisitions by our electric distribution companies are green projects from out of state. So this is actually getting green projects in the State of Connecticut. I think it's a good piece of legislation. And more solar, we're hopeful will diversify our grid and reduce our problems and keeps rates down. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark further on the bill?
Senator Formica, good afternoon, sir.

SENATOR FORMICA:

Good afternoon, Madam President. And thank you for your steady leadership in this session and your hands on the wheel here.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

SENATOR FORMICA:

Made it a pleasure. I rise in support of this bill. This is a very good opportunity for the state rate payers to benefit and the state to move forward and develop, as the good Chairman said, a cap of 300 megawatts by 2022 of good solar programs, good solar on rooftops. This 300 megawatts could power 40,000 homes, which is a fair amount of number. And additionally, it begins to reduce the incentives over time so that the training wheels eventually will come off the solar program and it will stand on its own as a resource to power energy here in the State of Connecticut.

The rate payers will benefit as it will help to satisfy the renewable requirements that they have to move forward on. And it eventually will help to capitalize the Green Bank so that it will be able to expand into other incentives and renewable programs in

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the years ahead. So I'd like to thank the good Chairman and the Committee for bringing this forward as it's a benefit, again, to the consumer. And thank you, Madam President, for your time.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the bill? Will you remark further? If not, Mr. Clerk, will you call for a roll call vote. The machine will be open.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Immediate roll call ordered in the Senate.

[pause]

THE CHAIR:

If all members have voted, if all members have voted, the machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk, will you please call the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill 6838

Total Number Voting	35
Necessary for Passage	18
Those voting Yea	35
Those voting Nay	0
Absent/not voting	1

THE CHAIR:

The bill passes. [gavel] Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF:

Thank you, Madam President. Would the Clerk please now call Calendar Page 15, Calendar 586, House Bill 6965.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.