MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT
Providing Equitable Access to Energy Efficiency Services and Renewable Energy

S.B. 356: Establishing an Energy Efficiency Retrofit Grant Program for Affordable Housing

BACKGROUND
Connecticut has committed to a 45% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 2030 and an 80% GHG reduction by the year 2050. To achieve these goals, the state’s aging housing stock must be overhauled to meet peak energy efficiency standards. According to the Energy Information Administration, buildings, and electricity generation for buildings account for more than 50% of Connecticut’s net carbon emissions, with the residential sector consisting of more than 30% of the State’s total energy consumption.

Connecticut additionally has some of the highest energy costs in the nation, which are disproportionately borne by low-to-moderate income (LMI) households. Energy efficient buildings save residents money and provide them with the shelter needed to survive extreme hot and cold temperatures, even during intermittent power outages. Unfortunately, as many as 30% of LMI homes in Connecticut have one or more barriers which make them ineligible to reduce their energy bills and realize the full benefits of optimal home weatherization.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS
• Establishes a comprehensive energy efficiency retrofit grant program to fund the installation of energy efficiency upgrades to affordable housing units. These include, but are not limited to, rooftop solar, heat pumps, balanced ventilation, and other mitigation of often-found hazards such as gas leaks, mold, vermiculite, and asbestos, which prevent residents from fully accessing available energy efficiency programs;
• Prioritizes low-to-moderate income families; and
• Increases energy efficient retrofits with annual goals of 5% of eligible housing (approximately 13,700 units) in each of 2021, 2022 and 2023, and 10% each in 2024 and 2025 (totaling 35%).

RECOMMENDED CHANGES
• Include commitments to hiring from within affected LMI communities; and
• Include a workforce training program to help transition community members into good paying skilled labor jobs.

CITIZENS CAMPAIGN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTS H.B. 6551 – AN ACT CONCERNING ENVIRONMENTAL AIR QUALITY
Citizens Campaign for the Environment is an 120,000-member non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization that works to empower communities and advocate solutions that protect public health and the natural environment.

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