



Testimony on House Bill 5002 (an act concerning the development of a green new deal)

Submitted by Donald Emanuel III, Policy Intern

DATE 2/21/2019

Good afternoon. My name is Donald Emanuel III. I am an intern at the Yankee Institute for Public Policy, Connecticut's free-market think tank. I submit this note in opposition to **Bill 5002**.

The proposed **Bill 5002** does not take into account, or try to assess, the affordability nor the practicality of a Connecticut "green new deal." It does not even make much effort to clarify specifically what it has in mind. Regardless of personal feelings about the environment, the extreme measures that have been discussed as part of the recently proposed *federal* green new deal are not warranted by – among other things – Connecticut's current fiscal position.

To take one example, the state of Connecticut would need to invest hundreds of billions of dollars to reach a net-zero emission standard. The cost of moving to power-generating infrastructure that would adhere to a net-zero emission standard would cost the nation around \$14.6 trillion.¹ As Connecticut residents constitute approximately one percent of the national population, we might reasonably expect Connecticut's portion of that cost to equal about \$140 billion – or the state's *entire* revenue stream for seven years, with absolutely no other money spent on anything else – if the state were contributing to a national effort. If the state were to act alone, however, we could expect costs to be much higher. It goes without saying that this goal is beyond the state's wildest ambitions.

From a practicality standpoint, the land area that would need to be allocated to accommodate the green-energy-generating equipment would be either unacceptable to most Connecticut citizens, or impossible as a matter of usable free space available. According to CT.Gov, the state of Connecticut is 5,018 square miles, which is 3,211,520 acres.² According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the current net electricity generation in Connecticut is 2,801,000 MWh per month.³ Assume for illustrative sake that solar panels were used to generate this green power. Solar panels typically require 5 acres of land in full-sun conditions to generate 1

¹ See, e.g., Ryan Bourne, *Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's Green New Deal is a radical front for nationalizing our economy*, USA TODAY (Feb. 11, 2019), available at [usatoday.com/story/opinion/2019/02/11/aoc-green-new-deal-government-expansion-masquerading-climate-plan-column/2813404002/](https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2019/02/11/aoc-green-new-deal-government-expansion-masquerading-climate-plan-column/2813404002/).

² See CT.Gov at <https://portal.ct.gov/About/The-Land>.

³ See U.S. Energy Information Administration at <https://www.eia.gov/state/data.php?sid=CT#SupplyDistribution>.

MWh. Connecticut would lose .0078125 square miles per MWh needed to replace our current usage. To accommodate all of those solar panels would require 781 square miles in full-sun conditions to accommodate Connecticut's daily electricity demands. That would require over 15% of Connecticut's land area to be allocated to solar-panel infrastructure. Connecticut's topography does not have an unallocated area equal to 15% of its land that would meet the full-sun requirement for the solar panels to work at or near peak efficiency. Because of elevated terrain, the solar panels could not be placed on the North or South side of hills or mountains and operate at an efficient level. That point aside, there would still need to be an alternate source of electricity to power the state at night, or during inclement weather.

To put that another way, assume instead that Connecticut chose to switch only its homes to solar energy and required solar panels to be installed on all 887,891 single-family homes.⁴ This would require about 35 of the typically used 250-watt solar panels to power each house during daylight hours. That means Connecticut would need over 31 million of the 250-watt solar panels to power just the single-family homes in Connecticut during daylight hours. Each night, or during inclement weather, those homes will still require an alternative power source.

Similar calculations could be made to highlight the impracticality of multiple green-energy sources at their current output and efficiency levels. Windmills, for example, would be as impractical as solar. For that, and many other reasons, we at Yankee Institute do not support **Bill 5002**. The free market will eventually push companies in the green-energy sector to be more efficient, and the winners and losers in that sector can be sorted out prior to allocating Connecticut's valuable and limited resources. A patient and sensible approach to green energy is the only responsible way to address Connecticut's considerable energy demands. The fiscal capital of Connecticut should not be sacrificed to allow lawmakers to use buzzwords like a "Green New Deal" to pander to their well-meaning supporters at the expense of the state's financial integrity.

⁴ See United States Census Bureau at <https://www.census.gov/hhes/www/housing/census/historic/units.html>.