



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

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February 28, 2025

Honored Co-Chairs Sen. Lopes and Rep. Parker, Vice Chairs Sen. Hochadel and Rep. Bumgardner, Ranking Members Sen. Harding and Rep. Callahan, Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee,

Re: Proposed House Bill No. 5004 - An Act Concerning the Protection of the Environment and the Development of Renewable Energy Sources and Associated Job Sectors

The Council on Environmental Quality (Council) is a nine-member board that works independently of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to assess the condition of Connecticut's environment and report its findings annually to the Governor; recommend actions to improve state environmental programs; advise other state agencies on the environmental impacts of proposed projects; and investigate citizens' complaints and allegations of violations of environmental laws.

The Council **SUPPORTS** the provisions identified in Committee Bill No. 5004 that would establish greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction goals for state agencies; promote water and energy conservation, renewable energy and increased energy efficiency; and advance nature-based solutions. As noted in the Council's annual report, [*Environmental Quality in Connecticut*](#), in order to meet the GHG emissions reduction goal for 2030, significant reductions of per capita GHG emissions will be needed.

Regarding the proposed revision identified in Section 24 of the proposed bill, the Council questions the use of public funds, administered through the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program, for the development of urban agricultural sites on such open space for commercial use since 1) such use is not identified in the eligibility criteria of CGS Section 7-131d (b), and 2) the provisions of CGS Section 7-131d (c)(1) state that no grant may be made under the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program for "land to be used for commercial purposes".

Thank you for consideration of the Council's comments.

Sincerely,

Paul Aresta
Executive Director