To: The Governors Council on Climate Change:

My family and I would like to thank the members of GC3 for their work to reduce global warming. We hope that your plan will be completely about converting to a clean energy system and economy, where energy efficiency, energy conservation and renewable energies such as solar and wind are the predominant considerations.
There is no need and room for new nuclear and/or fossil future infrastructure. While two decades ago, fracked natural gas looked to some as a bridge fuel to coming renewables, the last decade has revealed that natural gas is actually a bridge to disaster. More than a dozen peer reviewed papers have confirmed the fact that methane is even worse than carbon for climate change. Failing to include the huge effect of gas leaks in Connecticut emissions models would be dangerously irresponsible. Additionally fossil fuels are no longer needed because renewables are now competitive in cost and in the long run cheaper. We urge those proposing a model for measuring greenhouse gas emissions for the state of Connecticut to include ALL factors that will impact the state's contribution to global warming. These must include current and anticipated methane emission measurements in Connecticut AND upstream at the fracking sites that provide the gas. In addition, to be in line with the standards at the Paris climate talks, the goal of the modeling efforts must be to limit the global atmospheric temperature rise to 1.5 degrees centigrade maximum and to recognize in the plan that achieving 100% renewable energy by 2030—not 80% by 2050—is the rational, necessary and effective approach to meeting the climate challenge. Please note the following reasons to stop the current energy plan involving gas:
-Gas expansion projects should be stopped immediately and the funds re-directed toward renewables. The economics of the pipeline expansion make no sense. It costs approximately $5000-$6000 to convert a home or business to use natural gas, a cost which is subsidized in part by ratepayers.
-The governor's budget slashes jobs and beneficial services, while continuing to enrich a toxic industry at the expense of working people, via the transfer of the public's money into the private, for profit corporations Eversource and UI/Iberdrola.
- Modern air sourced heat pumps can provide 95% of our heat from renewable electricity at lower costs. There is no economic reason to convert to gas.
-Natural gas is 97% methane, the second most common greenhouse gas. Methane is a much larger cause of global warming in the short term than carbon dioxide, yet its emissions are unregulated and largely not measured. Most natural gas is obtained by a leaky fracking process these days, so the increased use and transport of methane encourages fracking in other states, and means more methane emissions and numerous toxins being released into the earth, water and atmosphere.
-There is no benefit to the climate in converting hundreds of thousands of new customers, or electric generating plants, to gas; in fact, these conversions will hasten climate change (Howarth; 2014).

-) Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healy released a 2015 report which showed that New England doesn't need expanded interstate gas pipeline capacity to meet future needs. Here in Connecticut, the Governor is using the residential gas conversions to fabricate a need for methane gas that doesn't exist, and thereby creating justification for the expanded intrastate and interstate gas pipeline expansions. The entire gas infrastructure expansion in Connecticut is not needed.
-The drinking water supply of hundreds of thousands of Central Connecticut residents is potentially at risk from new interstate gas pipeline scheduled for construction in MDC watershed.
-The expansion of methane gas use and transport subverts the needed conversion to a 100% renewable energy powered economy.
- The proposed gas expansion doesn't include closing the coal and nuclear plants in the state; it simply adds more climate destroying pollution, dangerous toxins and huge risks to our energy mix. Converting power plants by 2050 to 100% renewable energy and buildings to electric high efficiency heat pumps is currently feasible and cost-competitive. Cities and countries are in the process of converting their power to 100% renewable sources, such as wind, solar, and tidal. Connecticut lags far behind the national average in renewable energy.
- A renewable energy economy is socially just. It creates many more secure jobs than do fossil fuel extraction and operation projects; it lightens the burden of environmental harm currently suffered by low income communities from industry and power plants in their neighborhoods; it provides greater resiliency in a worsening climate; it is of potential benefit to those who suffer the worst effects from climate change.
-We are out of time. According to a recent report from the science journal Nature, sea level rise will be significantly higher than previously predicted, due to melting of the Antarctic ice sheet. Davis and Socolow in a 2014 paper establish that to stay below the 2.0C rise agreed to in Paris, we can build no new fossil fuel or nuclear energy infrastructure, or buildings or cars powered by fossil fuels, after 2017. We must stop burning additional fossil fuels now and achieve a transition to a 100% renewable energy powered economy by 2030 or sooner to stay below the 1.5C target rise. The political will must turn to this achievable goal, and away from the remunerative embrace of the gas industry.