



Policy Recommendations to the Speaker's Green Jobs Work Group  
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Environment Connecticut recommends these policy proposals to stimulate economic growth, job creation, and environmental protection. Many of the specific policy proposals listed below are the product of a collaborative effort by a diverse group of Connecticut-based environmental advocacy organizations. (These proposals are addressed in more detail in the "Building Connecticut's Economic and Environmental Future" briefing paper provided to the work group at its last meeting.)

Our goal is to highlight specific policies that Connecticut can pursue in order to stimulate the state's economy, support "green" job creation and retention across multiple business sectors, and promote cleaner air, water and preservation of the state's landscape and natural resources.

- Strengthen coordination and collaboration between the multitude of clean energy programs currently housed across many separate state agencies and quasi-public entities. Create a unified framework with clear accountability and transparency for such programs.
- Consider linking investments in clean energy and energy efficiency programs to investments in workforce training by requiring that a minimum percentage of funding dedicated to clean energy and efficiency incentive or rebate programs be directed towards workforce development.
- Establish innovative Municipal Clean Energy Financing programs. Enable municipalities, either individually or through regional collaboration, to issue bonds to finance clean energy finance loan programs enabling homeowners and small businesses to finance clean energy and energy efficiency investments. Pay back of such loans could be made through mechanisms such as a voluntary long-term assessment on their local property tax.
- Fully implement the "efficiency first" provision of PA 07-242 that requires the Integrated Resource Plan developed by the utilities and approved by the DPUC to prioritize all cost-effective energy efficiency investments before new electric generation.
- Create stable solar and other clean energy incentive programs that break the boom-bust cycle of unstable incentives that have stifled growth of Connecticut-based clean energy businesses. (Particularly solar.) Design such programs with a goal of reducing needed incentives in an orderly fashion over time with the ultimate goal of creating self-sustaining in-state clean energy industries (such as solar or fuel cells) that are not dependent upon public or ratepayer subsidies for growth.

- Incentivize large scale private sector energy efficiency investments, above and beyond existing programs, by gradually increasing the Class III Renewable Portfolio Standard from 4% to 20% by 2020. Also, to ensure that residential ratepayers benefit directly from Class III efficiency programs, limit the total percentage of Class III demand met by Conservation & Load Management Fund measures. Additionally require that a certain percentage be met by efficiency measures directly benefiting residential ratepayers.
- Support creation of commuter rail corridors and linked intermodal transit networks serving Connecticut's communities. Enabling economic growth and "green job" creation in traditional industries and occupations serving construction and operation of transit systems as well as stimulating economic growth in communities served by transit corridors.
- Maintain Clean Water Fund investments in clean water infrastructure that support jobs tied to municipal and state projects that improve water quality in the state's waterways and Long Island Sound.
- Create linkages between clean energy programs and sustainable agriculture programs. Enabling Connecticut agricultural businesses to invest in clean energy and energy efficiency measures that reduce operating expenses, protecting farm jobs and stimulating growth in clean energy and efficiency-related "green jobs."
- Create a Toxic Use Reduction Institute (modeled on the successful existing program in Massachusetts) to promote public-private business and educational partnerships to drive economic growth and pollution prevention through green chemistry and technical assistance for Connecticut businesses to shift to safer alternatives to toxic chemicals. This would help businesses reduce costs associated with handling of hazardous materials and enable them to compete more effectively in a global marketplace with increasingly stringent chemical regulations and treaties.
- Promote smart investing by state agencies. Require agencies to incorporate principles of smart growth into decision-making criteria when requesting and spending bond commission and operating funds. Prioritizing transit projects that reduce global warming pollution, economic development that supports "green" job growth, brownfield clean-up in urban centers, preserve farms and related "green" projects. Additionally, require lower priority be given to projects that increase vehicle miles traveled or promote destruction of open space and farmland.