

# The Connecticut General Assembly

## House Democrats



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## **Bridgeport delegation applauds passage of bill allowing city to become recognized leader in renewable energy**

*H.B. 6304 seeks to create pilot program allowing city to test-drive thermal district heating technology*

Legislation that will pave the way for Bridgeport to become a national model for the reuse of waste heat passed out of the House of Representatives Tuesday in a 100-51 vote.

[House Bill 6304](#) which is vehemently supported by the Bridgeport delegation, and **state Reps. Lonnie Reed** (D-Branford), **Joe Gresko** (D-Stamford) and **Laura Hoydick** (R-Stratford) seeks to establish a pilot program in the city to test-drive thermal district heating technology.

This pilot program will allow the city to build a Combined Heat and Power Plant that will support the Bridgeport Heating District. Through this, thermal energy will be generated through a combined heat and power generator unit. The heat that is dispelled will be sent through pipes to heat Bridgeport city buildings.

“What we are doing here today is continuing to make a small but significant investment in the state’s largest city. This is a \$90 million investment overall that is being made not only by state taxpayers, but private industries to provide more reliable and cheaper heat,” said **state Rep. Steve Stafstrom**. “This will allow Bridgeport to continue the progress it has made over the last 10 to 15 years to revitalize its downtown, bring jobs and residents back to the city and be the economic driver that we know we can and should be for Connecticut.”

Bridgeport was selected for the pilot program because of the city’s push to create more renewable energy locally, and its objective to improve its air quality and decarbonize the atmosphere.

“The Bridgeport delegation continues to move good bills forward that not only benefit Bridgeport, but improve air quality by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The passage of H.B. 6304 will create a thermal heating loop in the downtown area, including the University of Bridgeport that will lower utility costs while reducing our carbon footprint. Since President Trump’s withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement, it is up to cities like Bridgeport to provide the necessary leadership to preserve our children’s future,” said **state Rep. Jack Hennessy**.

“We have been working for some time to bring energy options to Bridgeport that increase efficiency and decrease harmful environmental impact,” said **state Rep. Ezequiel Santiago**. “This program puts us on the right path to a cleaner, greener tomorrow.”

Two legislative sessions ago, the state set aside \$9 million to help fund the pilot program. This program stands to benefit not only city taxpayers but residents statewide.

"The passage of this bill puts us one major step closer to making Bridgeport an internationally recognized innovator employing this cutting edge thermal loop technology. This pilot program is a game changer that has potential to drastically reduce Bridgeport's carbon footprint and recycle waste heat," said **Bridgeport Mayor Joe Ganim**. "If successful, this can be duplicated globally and have a positive impact on reducing or reversing climate change. I am very proud of the strong advocacy for the clean energy future of our city by Bridgeport's house delegation and I urge the Senate to pass this bill before the end of the legislative session."

This cutting edge technology is the most cost-effective way to heat cities while minimizing environmental impact. Through district heating, the use of natural gas or oil by customers will result in a nearly [80 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions](#).

"It is vital that we continue to invest in our large cities to sustain a brighter future for our residents. This project will not only allow Bridgeport to be at the forefront of renewable energy, but it will become a model that other Connecticut municipalities can look to when deciding whether to use this technology locally," said **state Rep. Andre Baker**.

"Thermal loop technology will provide cheaper and more reliable heat downtown," said **state Rep. Charlie Stallworth** said. "This is a great investment for Bridgeport – our city and our taxpayers."

This pilot program will not only allow employees to learn a new skill, but it will increase job growth in Bridgeport. The economic impact for the project's initial phase is approximately [\\$50 million from construction and full-time jobs](#). The city is also slated to receive associated tax revenues from the project.

"I am pleased our delegation worked together to move legislation that will have significant impact on our city as we look forward to becoming a leader on thermal loop technology," said **state Rep. Christopher Rosario**. "Everything we do today to advance green energy is a sure step forward towards a stronger and cleaner planet for generations to come."

H.B. 6304 now heads to the Senate for consideration.

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