

Summary: HB 5004 - AAC the Implementation off Certain Climate Change Measures

AKA The Connecticut Climate Protection Act of 2024

Overarching Goals:

- *Updates the state's Global Warming Solutions Act to make our greenhouse gas emissions targets more in line with other states in the region;*
- *Creates incentives for businesses that engage in clean economy sectors or engage in environmentally sustainable projects;*
- *Plans for transition to clean economy, including workforce training and long-term policy implementation; and*
- *Supports and expands Nature-Based Solutions*

Section Summaries:

Sec. 1: Declaration of a Climate Crisis

- Sends a strong message that Connecticut takes climate change seriously and is prepared to take actions to mitigate carbon emissions
- Signals urgency to state agencies, businesses, residents and stakeholders
- Helps increase the state's chances of obtaining federal funds
- Does not authorize the governor additional powers if a climate emergency were declared

Sec. 2: Sets GHG emissions targets for State Agencies

- Delineates interim benchmark GHG reduction targets, as follows:
- 45% reduction from 2001 levels by 2030
- 70% reduction from 2016 levels by 2040
- All electricity used by state agencies to be from zero carbon sources by 2030

Sec. 3 Definitions

- Adds definitions for “Carbon sequestration” and “Net-zero” to the GWSA

Sec 4: Updates Emissions Reductions Targets for the GWSA

- Updates GWSA targets to reducing GHG 65% by 2040,
- Economy-wide Target: Net-zero by 2050
- Requires DEEP to enter into an agreement with a consultant to create a report evaluating strategies, priorities, and adequacy of standards delineated in the section
- Defines the failure to achieve reduction benchmarks as contributing to the unreasonable pollution or impairment of the public trust in natural resources of the state

Section 5: Makes improvements to the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA)

- Directs DEEP's recommended regulatory actions and policies to include necessary provisions to make reasonable progress towards GHG reduction & allows inclusion of carbon sequestration.
- Citizen suit provision to enforce GWSA

Sec. 6: Directs PURA to open future of natural gas docket

- Directs PURA to study and report recommendations for phasing out natural gas in accordance with GWSA targets

Sec. 7: Requires GHG Analysis for Energy and Transportation Projects

- Requires the consideration of GHG emissions in permitting transportation & energy infrastructure
- Requires recommendations to mitigate impacts if permit is inconsistent with GWSA

Sec. 8: Creates an Energy Transparency Data Bill of Rights

- Requires DEEP to publish in a consolidated place on its website information to consumers about: energy usage and distribution, sources and costs of energy in the state, electric vehicle and charging information, resources for installing solar

Sec. 9: Gives Businesses Tax Credits if environmentally sustainable

- Directs the Commissioner of DECD to provide Jobs CT Tax Credit preference to applications with sustainable practices such as zero-carbon energy or energy efficiency
- Includes sustainable farms

Section 10: Creates Incentives for environmentally sustainable practices

- Directs the DRS to identify and report to a list of business fees appropriate for waiver for Certified B Corporations and environmentally sustainable farms.

Sec. 11: Creates the CT Clean Economy Council

- Work with the Office of Workforce Strategy to increase workforce training in the clean energy sector with a goal of creating opportunities for populations that are underrepresented
- Identify funding sources for climate and sustainability investments
- Ensure state's workforce is trained in climate and sustainability-related jobs
- Develop plan to transition fossil fuel workers to clean economy jobs
- Identify opportunities to leverage state and federal funds

Sec. 12: Creates Small Business Incubator Pilot Program

- Directs the state to establish a pilot program to serve as a new business incubator for zero-carbon startup companies, utilizing a state-owned surplus facility
- Encourages qualified applicants to create start-ups that combine zero carbon light manufacturing, retail and affordable (workforce) housing
- Preference will be given to projects that provide nature-based alternatives to plastic

Sec. 13: Expand Commercial Solar

- Removes the annual capacity caps from the commercial solar programs commensurate with available federal (IRA) funding to support commercial solar in the state

Sec. 14: Expands PURA Energy Storage Program

- Authorizes PURA to increase energy storage incentives and increases the energy storage target to 1,000 MW

Sec. 15: Additional School Construction Reimbursement for Clean Energy Projects

- Increases school grants by 10% points for renewable energy or energy efficiency improvements

Sec. 16 and 17: Product Efficiency Standards: Heat Pumps and Hot Water Systems

- Directs DEEP to make recommendations for sale & installation of HVAC & hot water heating systems that have zero GHG
- Directs DEEP & PURA develop and implement a plan for installation of 310,000 residential heat pump systems by Jan. 1, 2026

Sec. 18: Municipal Plans of Conservation and Development

- Requires municipal POCD plans to evaluate environmental sustainability and climate resiliency

Sec. 19 and 20: Sustainable Purchasing

- Directs OPM to develop a model policy for sustainable purchasing, that municipalities may voluntarily adopt through resolutions
- Provides the opportunity for additional LOCIP funds for municipalities that implement a sustainable purchasing policy

Sec. 21: State buildings

- Requires new or renovated state buildings to use electrical systems that are not resilient on fossil fuels, if funding is available

Sec. 22: Support Nature-based solutions

- Directs DEEP to develop a plan and proposed program for utilizing nature-based support climate change mitigation and adaptation and outlines examples
- Such solutions could include increasing carbon sequestration, controlling invasive species, growing forests, and restoring coastal habitats, among other strategies