



TESTIMONY of
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before the

SENATE ENERGY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

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Clean Air-Cool Planet is a non-profit organization based in Portsmouth that creates partnerships throughout the Northeast to implement solutions to climate change. We work with businesses, colleges & universities, and municipalities, including the University of New Hampshire, Verizon Corporation, The Timberland Company, Shaw's Supermarkets and the cities of Keene and Nashua.

We support the Smart Energy Bill, Senate Bill 105 for the following reasons:

Climate Change is real and its causes must be addressed now.

Climate change is already occurring and its effects are being seen and experienced here in New Hampshire. In just the last few months, several more peer-reviewed studies have been released documenting observed geographic shifts in the range of plant and animal species, a drastic thinning of the ice over the North Pole, and the rapid retreat of glaciers around the world. The reality of climate change and its projected impacts on this state have been documented and described in several publications authored by scientists and researchers at the University of New Hampshire. The bottom line of these projections is that if left unchecked, rising concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere will, by middle of this century, render our climate here in New Hampshire like that of Richmond, Virginia today. By 2100, our climate could be like that of today's Atlanta, Georgia. The implications of this kind of rapid change are profound: the damage to core New Hampshire economic interests like fall foliage tourism, winter recreation, the forest products industry, the coastal zone, and the maple syrup industry would be severe.

A Regional Climate Action Plan calling for substantial emissions reductions is in place.

In August of 2001, the governors of all six New England states – a group then composed of three Republicans (Rowland, Swift, Almond), two Democrats (Shaheen, Dean), and one Independent (King), in partnership the premiers of the five eastern-most Canadian provinces, adopted a regional Climate Change Action Plan that calls for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases across the region to 1990 levels by 2010, and to 10% below 1990 levels by 2020. That may sound bold and ambitious, but their resolve went even farther: these eleven Northeast state and provincial leaders explicitly

recognized that those levels of reductions were only first steps, that reductions over the long term – say, by mid-century – of 75-85% below current levels are necessary to “eliminate any dangerous threat to the climate.”

Energy efficiency standards are a common-sense way for New Hampshire to reduce emissions.

It will take a large and sustained effort to achieve these kinds of reductions in the greenhouse gas-intensity of our state and regional economy. Adopting energy efficiency standards for commonly used residential and commercial products, the efficiencies of which are currently covered by no federal standard, is among the easiest and lowest-cost measures that the state could consider. In fact, energy efficiency standards are a measure that will deliver substantial net benefits to the state – every one of the proposed standards has a payback period that is a fraction of the product’s useful life.

Enforcement of energy efficiency standards is very low-cost and low-effort.

Experience in other states has demonstrated that the certification and labeling requirements contained in the bill are very effective in ensuring manufacturer, distributor, and retailer compliance with the standards, with minimal active enforcement required. In fact, state and federal level experience has been that once efficiency standards are established, manufacturers, distributors, and even retailers largely “police” each other, to ensure that they don’t lose market share to a competitor who is illegally marketing inferior products. The specter of “state energy efficiency police” raiding retail establishments, confiscating non-complying products, and imposing huge fines on unsuspecting small businesses – which the stalwart opponents of efficiency standards (manufacturers and their industry associations) are not above raising – are completely unfounded. Simply requiring manufacturers to certify to the Public Utilities Commission that their products meet the standards, and empowering the Commission to investigate and the Attorney General to take enforcement action on any alleged non-compliance, is all that is necessary.

In summary, energy efficiency standards are one of the easiest and most common-sense strategies that New Hampshire could possibly employ to help achieve the kind of reductions in greenhouse gas emissions that we MUST in order to protect our state’s economy and way of life and live up to our commitment to other New England states and our neighbors to the north to undertake measures that will help reduce the threat of climate change.

A graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy with a Master’s degree in Public Policy from Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government, Ned Reynolds has more than 10 years experience working in environmental programs, mostly on energy issues. After eight years on active duty in the Coast Guard, he worked on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s ENERGY STAR® program at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and at the non-profit Alliance to Save Energy in Washington, D.C., and then as Policy Outreach Manager for the non-profit Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships.