



2021 ENVIRONMENTAL SCORECARD





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1930 - 2021

This year's Environmental Scorecard is dedicated to CTLCV's co-founder Julie Belaga. A mentor to all and a dedicated public servant, Julie has left a lasting impact on CTLCV and Connecticut's environmental movement as a whole.

Julie served in the CT General Assembly for a decade and ran for Governor of Connecticut. Her expertise, and her passion for environmental issues attracted the attention of President George H.W. Bush who appointed her to be the Administrator of the US Environmental Protection Agency for New England. A few years later, President Bill Clinton appointed Julie to the Export-Import Bank, where she ensured that American loans were not made to industries that would damage our environment.

CTLCV is grateful for her children Debra, David and Heather, who established the Julie Belaga Scholarship Fund to help advance CTLCV's mission, as well as create a paid internship program in her name.



HOW TO USE THIS SCORECARD

HOW BILLS ARE SELECTED

Legislation included in this Scorecard represents a diverse set of environmental concerns. Environmental groups from around the state inform us about their priority bills. We consult with advocates throughout the session, lobby lawmakers on important initiatives, and track their votes.

HOW LEGISLATORS ARE SCORED

CTLCV grades legislators on a 0% to 100% scale based on their votes on environmental bills in committees, the Senate, and the House. The 2021 final score is the average of the legislator's individual votes on key bills we score. A blank space means there was no vote to score for that legislator on that bill. We do not score absences or abstentions, but they are indicated on our scorecard with an "A."

OUR ENVIRONMENTAL SCORECARD IS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF OUR MEMBERS AND DONORS.



HOLD LAWMAKERS ACCOUNTABLE

Connecticut is our home. It's a remarkable place to live, work, and play. CTLCV fights to protect our state's great natural legacy for future generations.

To do this, we must hold our elected officials accountable. This Environmental Scorecard shows how your lawmakers voted on critical environmental bills during the most recent legislative session.

What you can do:

- 1 Read this Scorecard
- 2 Follow CTLCV on Facebook & Twitter
- 3 Sign up for Action Alerts
- 4 Tell lawmakers you know the score!

And, of course, one of the most powerful resources you have is your vote. Don't miss your chance to make your voice heard in the upcoming elections!

To learn more and join our movement, visit us online at [CTLCV.org](https://www.ctlcvc.org).

WHAT HAS CTLCV BEEN UP TO?

THE SCORECARD IS BACK!

This is the first Scorecard that CTLCV has produced since Covid-19 shut down the legislature in **March of 2020**.

That year, lawmakers had just completed the public hearing phase on a robust agenda of pro-environment bills and legislators were beginning to cast votes in their various committees. Then everything shut down and life shifted.

The work, however, did not stop. It required immediate attention to a whole new set of issues to prevent rollbacks of existing laws, most notably recycling, plastic bags, and changes to the state land transfer act to ensure strong cleanup standards for polluted brownfield sites.

CTLCV also took on important voting rights work to ensure Connecticut citizens could easily vote to elect our legislative champions during a dangerous pandemic. This work directly connected into the larger issue of racial justice gripping our nation and the voter suppression tactics we are experiencing today—even in CT.

While the Lamont Administration continued to govern under emergency Executive powers during the pandemic, lawmakers convened a special session in July 2020 to pass temporary measures to allow early voting and the use of absentee ballots, but also to address law enforcement measures impacting communities of color. They convened another special session in September to address the mismanagement of Eversource's storm response, make modest updates to Connecticut's Environmental Justice laws, and pass sweeping changes to the Transfer Act.

Our work then shifted again to the 2020 Elections, where CTLCV's Political Action Committee endorsed pro-environment candidates and helped to elect legislative champions to the state House and Senate.

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT...

In **January 2021**, we held our Environmental Summit virtually as Covid raged on. Legislative leaders managed to convene a full session of the Connecticut General Assembly to conduct business, which included committee meetings and public hearings via zoom. Many of the bills poised for passage in 2020 were back on the table.

Two monumental victories of the session were updating Connecticut's **"Bottle Bill"** recycling program, and banning toxic **PFAS** chemicals in firefighting foam and consumer products. These wins were multi-year efforts at the center of intense political battles with industry.

Lawmakers passed important resolutions to make voting easier by allowing **Early in-Person Voting** and **No-Excuse Absentee Ballots**. But many other major bills were left to die without action or were deliberately killed. Lawmakers failed to allow direct sales of electric vehicles, to provide a municipal funding option for the environment, to reduce single use plastics, to update our Environmental Justice statutes, to mandate a 100% clean energy grid by 2040, or to set vehicle emission standards for trucks.

The Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3) produced recommendations that led to three significant bills introduced by the Lamont Administration to address adaptation, mitigation, clean energy, and nature-based solutions to our current climate crisis. Environmental leaders supported these initiatives and fought for a full range of proposals, including the most significant climate legislation our state had seen in more than a decade: The Transportation & Climate Initiative (TCI).

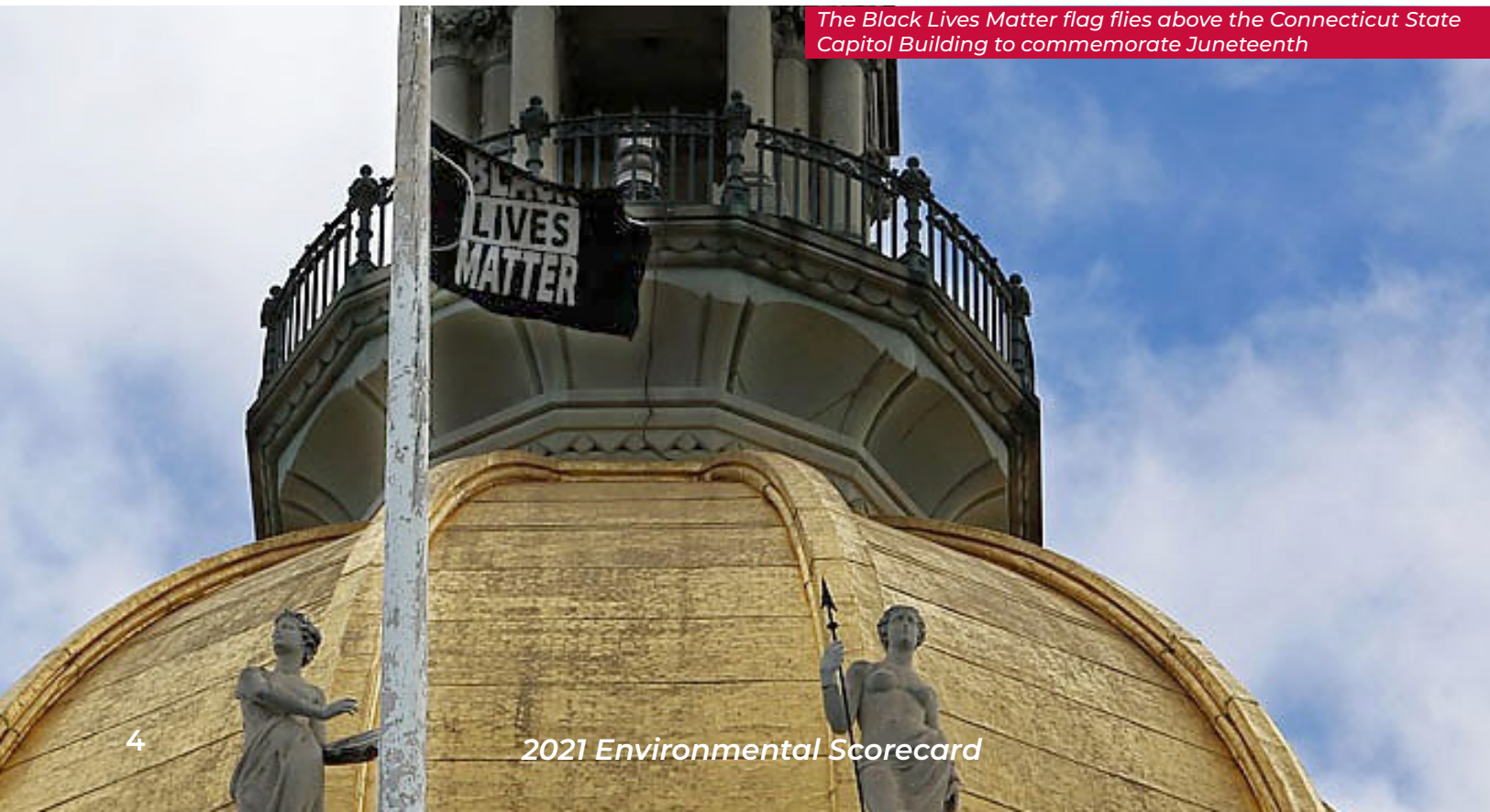
In the end lawmakers partially passed only one of the Governor's climate bills, and TCI was put on pause to be revisited at a later date. Descriptions of these bills are contained in this document.



The Eco Green Warriors show their support for the PFAS bill at the PFAS bill signing and press conference.



The Black Lives Matter flag flies above the Connecticut State Capitol Building to commemorate Juneteenth



2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

2021 WINS

- SB 1037 Modernizing and Expanding the “Bottle Bill”
- SB 837 Restricting Toxic PFAS in Consumer Packaging and Firefighting Foam
- SB 356 Energy Retrofits in Affordable Housing
- SB 925 Wildlife Trafficking
- SB 952 Energy Storage
- SB 999 Workforce Development Programs for Renewable Energy
- HB 6503 Composting
- HJ 53 Long Island Sound Blue Plan
- HJ 58 No-Excuse Absentee Voting
- HJ 59 Early Voting

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- SB 127 Electric Vehicle Direct Sales
- SB 839 Pesticides
- SB 882 100% Zero Carbon Electric Grid
- SB 884 Transportation & Climate Initiative
- SB 931 Emissions Standards for Medium and Heavy Duty Vehicles
- SB 966 Metropolitan District Commission
- HB 5419 Clean Air Act fee
- HB 5884 Ranked Choice Voting
- HB 6386 Extended Producer Responsibility
- HB 6205 Absentee Voting Statutes
- HB 6502 Plastics and Polystyrene
- HB 6551 Air Quality/Environmental Justice/Data Centers
- HB 6619 Climate Change Education
- Municipal Funding Option for Open Space (deleted from HB 6441)



Advocates rally on Earth Day for the modernization and expansion of the of the Bottle Bill.



Advocates demand Climate Action now at an environmental justice rally in Hartford



WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2022?



THE 2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The big question we keep hearing from our members is whether lawmakers are taking our climate emergency seriously.

When Legislative leaders and the Governor walked away from the Transportation & Climate Initiative (TCI), they kicked the can down the road on the single largest regional program to reduce carbon emissions from cars, trucks and other vehicles. Transportation causes 40% of emissions that cause climate change, and that number is trending up. Constituents, especially our youth, are angry and distraught by the lack of action on climate by our elected leaders.

However, there are opportunities for legislators to pass some of the investment and policy pieces that would have been part of TCI. Lawmakers are working to advance significant clean air legislation that includes new **emission standards for medium and heavy duty vehicles** and spur growth of zero emissions vehicles.

Governor Lamont recently issued **Executive Order 21-3** on climate. The order identifies actions that can be taken by the Administration that do not require legislation, such as investing in electric school buses and transit buses, converting state vehicle fleets, helping farms implement climate smart practices, and maximizing protections for healthy forest and wetlands that protect us from the impacts of climate change.

Millions of **federal infrastructure and Covid recovery dollars** are now becoming available to Connecticut. Advocates are working to influence and watchdog the state's investments so that we uphold equity and environmental justice commitments to communities of color, which are often overburdened by polluting facilities and transportation emissions. State lawmakers must put a priority on passing long overdue changes to our existing **Environmental Justice laws** to strengthen protections for these communities.

Until Connecticut lawmakers adopt TCI, our state lacks limits on polluting emissions from transportation and a guaranteed source of funding needed to apply for federal transportation program dollars over the next 10 years.

CTLCV joins leading climate advocates in calling on lawmakers to align our state's environmental, natural resource, energy, and transportation policies with the pollution reduction goals contained in the **Global Warming Solutions Act**. This law mandates measurable reductions of greenhouse gas pollution by specific dates, but it is up to the legislature to pass the policies that will get us there.

The Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3) spent a year putting together a **comprehensive climate plan**. Some of those recommendations were put forward during the 2021 legislative session with mixed success. We hope that more recommendations from the GC3 will be offered and adopted in 2022.

Another priority for lawmakers this year must be to address the growing solid waste crisis that will be worsened with the necessary closing of the Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority, aka the **MIRA trash incinerator**. A critical piece of legislation that could dramatically cut down our municipal waste is known as **"Extended Producer Responsibility" (EPR)**.

Another waste management initiative that lawmakers should support is reducing single use **plastic and polystyrene** products including take out containers, straws and cutlery.

The legislature must pass into law Governor Lamont's Executive Order 3 that calls for a **100% zero carbon electric grid by 2040**.

This is a realistic and achievable goal that sends an important signal that our state is serious about reaching our emissions reductions targets.

Lawmakers should untie the hands of our state's Public Utility Regulatory Authority (PURA) and provide the authority to **stop permitting new fossil fuel power plants**, such as Killingly.



Governor Lamont signs PFAS legislation that restricts toxic "forever chemicals" from packaging and firefighting foam.

The Administration holds the power right now to put a stop to the state's gas expansion plan that is currently under review. Lawmakers must keep **investing in clean renewable energy** and remove the barriers to **rooftop solar**.

In 2022, we are calling on state leaders to ramp up their efforts to tackle climate change THIS YEAR.

Voters want to see that our leaders will fight for our environment.

HERE'S WHAT WE SCORED IN 2021

EV DIRECT SALES

SB 127 The Sale of Electric Vehicles in The State: SUPPORT/FAILED

Under the current law, manufacturers can only sell vehicles in Connecticut through 3rd party dealerships. SB 127 would have permitted electric vehicle manufacturers to sell directly to the consumer in Connecticut. Direct sales of electric cars and traditional dealer franchises coexist throughout the country. To date, there is no evidence of job loss in states where manufacturers sell directly to consumers. From an environmental, clean energy, and economic perspective, anything that makes it easier for consumers to drive, purchase, and maintain an electric vehicle is good for Connecticut's clean air goals. SB 127 would promote consumer choice and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

SEASIDE STATE PARK

SB 167 The Disposition of the Former Seaside Sanatorium Facility: OPPOSE/FAILED

SB 167 was an effort to open up protected state park land to commercial development. This legislation involved multiple state agencies, but was driven by the Department of Economic and Community Development to enable requests for proposals that would recommend residential uses for the former Seaside Sanatorium Facility in the town of Waterford. This would have set a terrible precedent for the protection of parkland in our state.

HOUSING

SB 356 An Act Concerning an Energy Efficiency Retrofit Grant Program for Affordable Housing: SUPPORT/PASSED

SB 356 establishes a comprehensive energy efficiency retrofit grant program to fund weatherization and improvements to affordable housing, including rooftop solar, insulation, heat pumps, energy storage systems, and EV charging. This program also awards grants for mitigation of health and safety hazards like gas leaks, mold, asbestos, lead and radon while prioritizing households that qualify for energy assistance. The new law is intended to equitably decrease energy demand, reduce pollution, mitigate health and safety concerns, increase affordability and improve living conditions for residents of the state.

PFAS

SB 837 An Act Concerning The Use of Perfluoroalkyl or Polyfluoroalkyl Substances in Class B Firefighting Foam: SUPPORT/PASSED

Despite known dangers of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), such as testicular and kidney cancer, liver damage, hormone disruption, asthma, and reproductive disorders, PFAS is still a key chemical used in firefighting foam, nonstick cookware, food packaging, cosmetics and other common household products. The prevalence of PFAS has caused hazardous pollution in 49 states including Connecticut, and the chemical has been found in tap water in millions of homes. (continued on page 10)



Passage of SB 837 (now Public Act 21-191) will restrict the use of PFAS chemicals at commercial airports and training sites where firefighting foam is used, unless required by federal law. This Act prohibits (1) using class B firefighting foam with intentionally added perfluoroalkyl or polyfluoroalkyl substance (PFAS) and (2) prohibits the sale of food packaging with PFAS intentionally introduced during manufacturing or distribution. This law will also establish a take-back program for municipally owned class-B firefighting foam.

PESTICIDES

SB 839 Electronic Documents and Pesticide Regulation in The State: SUPPORT/FAILED

SB 839 would have established an electronic method for storing and searching through records of pesticide applications made in the state. The legislation called for information contained in pesticide applications filed with DEEP to be entered in an electronic searchable spreadsheet and be available to members of the public. The goal was to establish accountability for pesticide use and aid in the monitoring and regulation of harmful substances.

100% ZERO CARBON GRID

SB 882 Climate Change Mitigation and Home Energy Affordability: SUPPORT/FAILED

The most recent data indicates that our efforts in Connecticut to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions have been insufficient. SB 882 was one of Governor Ned Lamont's three priority bills to address the sources and impacts of climate change in Connecticut. One of the major provisions of 882 would have codified into law the Governor's Executive Order No. 3, which requires our electric supply to be 100% clean, zero carbon by 2040.

The bill was abandoned when an amendment was proposed to tie permitting of all new fossil fuel infrastructure to the emissions reduction goals of CT's Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA). While the bill did not pass, it greatly highlighted the need to update our state's GWSA targets

and to change the way our electric grid operator (ISO New England) buys energy. Currently, the operator is only required to consider cost and reliability, and does not consider any of the clean energy and climate goals established by CT or our neighboring states.

WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

SB 925 Prohibiting the Import, Sale and Possession of African Elephants, Lions, Leopards, Black Rhinoceros, White Rhinoceros and Giraffes: SUPPORT/PASSED

SB 925 (now Public Act 21-52) is an effort to stop trophy hunting by prohibiting the import and trade of any of the "Big Six" imperiled African species: African elephants, lions, leopards, black rhinoceros, white rhinoceros, and giraffes. This law also sets up a registration system with DEEP for those with existing trophies (body parts), requires seizure and destruction of illegal trophies, and imposes penalties on violators. This bill also permits law enforcement officers to enforce any of the bill's provisions.



STATE BUDGET: DEEP Staffing "Cliff"

DEEP is facing a wave of retirements. How do we grow the next generation of conservationists?

CTLCV kicked off 2022 with another virtual Environmental Summit to prepare for the upcoming legislative session. There was much discussion about state funding for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). The agency anticipates that **45% of DEEP's staff is expected to retire before July 1, 2022**. This will include many talented and experienced land managers who are essential to the ongoing operations of state parks, forests, and Wildlife Management Areas and will be difficult to replace. While this retirement wave offers an opportunity for the next generation of climate leaders to assume critical state agency roles, there are big concerns about losing decades of accrued knowledge and retaining new talent. **The "Connecticut CREATES" report**, commissioned by the Lamont Administration, illuminates the impact these layoffs will have and what can be done to improve the situation.

TRANSPORTATION & CLIMATE INITIATIVE

SB 884 Reducing Transportation-Related Carbon Emissions: SUPPORT/FAILED

The Transportation & Climate Initiative (TCI) is a multi-state agreement that would cap transportation pollution, charge wholesale polluters for emissions, and direct the funds to improve transportation and air quality for all Connecticut residents. Connecticut signed on to TCI in 2020, but required approval by the legislature to allow the administration to start designing the program. In deciding to pause Connecticut's implementation of TCI, lawmakers have missed a critical opportunity to address our climate emergency with a regional approach that prioritized equitable investments. Meanwhile, transportation emissions continue to rise in our state, taking a huge toll on public health, our environment, and our economy.



Dr. Mark Mitchell, a physician and leading expert on air pollution-related illnesses speaks at a TCI press conference.



Advocates on bicycles highlight the importance of TCI for cyclists and pedestrian safety at the Bike, Walk, and Roll rally.

PFAS - PACKAGING

SB 926 An Act Concerning the Presence of PFAS In Certain Consumer Packaging: SUPPORT/PASSED as part of SB 837

Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are toxins contained in firefighting foam and other everyday products such as nonstick cookware, water-repellant, clothing, cosmetics, and other packaging materials. SB 926 prohibited manufacturers, suppliers and distributors from offering for sale or promotional purposes products with any detectable amount of PFAS. This bill was merged with a separate PFAS bill, SB 837, that was successfully passed into law (now Public Act 21-191).

EMISSIONS STANDARDS

SB 931 Emissions Standards for Medium and Heavy Duty Vehicles: SUPPORT/FAILED

In 2020, Connecticut joined 15 other states in signing an agreement to increase zero emission electric vehicles. To aid in this transition, Connecticut needstoadoptCalifornia'sAdvanced Clean Truck Rule requiring manufacturers to produce zero-emission trucks beginning in 2024, and increase production targets through 2035. The rule requires that sales of medium and heavy-duty vehicles reach at least 30% by 2030, 40% by 2035, and 100% by 2045.

SB 931 required DEEP to evaluate the need to adopt California's Advanced Clean Truck Rule to set medium and heavy duty vehicle emission standards. If adopted in Connecticut, these measures would eliminate air pollution from trucks and buses by 2050. Although the bill did not pass in 2021, DEEP is conducting the study and supports the initiative in 2022.

LAND USE APPEALS

SB 938 An Act Concerning Land Use Appeals: OPPOSE/FAILED

It is common practice for developers to sue towns that reject permits for proposals that would unreasonably damage the environment. Often, the town is forced to settle. Current law requires that a hearing be conducted in Superior Court before the developer can withdraw the application when a settlement is reached. The single hearing is necessary to hold land use authorities accountable and is an important tool for environmental groups to participate as parties advocating on behalf of the environment.

SB 938 would have allowed developers who are appealing a town's land use decision to withdraw their appeal prior to a hearing. Developers would have the opportunity to strike deals with planning and zoning bodies while cutting out potential intervenors and without establishing a public record. Intervenor can provide important information to the parties that can help inform a negotiated settlement and minimize the project's environmental damage.



BOTTLE BILL

SB 1037 Solid Waste Management: SUPPORT/PASSED

After a multi-year struggle to update Connecticut's landmark recycling law known as the "Bottle Bill," legislation was finally passed (now Public Act 21-58) that will significantly expand the program. The new law increases the types of containers that will have a refundable deposit, increases the deposit from 5 cents to 10 cents, and updates the handling fees—all necessary to increase our state's low recycling rates. The bill also calls for incentives for unit-based pricing programs in municipalities, and requires certain dealers to have reverse vending machines at their stores. This last provision is important to ensure that all communities have easy access to get back their deposit. The legislature also created a grant program for new redemption centers in Environmental Justice communities that prioritizes these business opportunities for women and minorities.

Unfortunately, the law does not expand the program to include wine and liquor bottles which are some of the heaviest materials in our waste stream; nor did it put a refundable deposit

on "nips", which account for huge quantities of discarded trash that pollute our waterways. Instead, the law puts a 5 cent non-refundable fee on nips which will be divided among municipalities to help fund their local waste management projects.

Lastly, the law tasks DEEP with creating a stewardship model that will maintain the deposit, expansion, and handling fee components, but also outlines a long-term comprehensive plan for an effective recycling program across Connecticut.



ENERGY

SB 952 Energy Storage: **SUPPORT/PASSED**

In order for our state to maximize development of clean, renewable energy such as wind and solar power, we must also be able to store the energy from the time it is produced to the time it is needed. This legislation (now Public Act 21-53) establishes goals, program requirements, and gives the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection the authority to procure energy storage projects. It must report annually to the Legislature's Energy and Technology Committee on its progress towards meeting the following energy storage goals: 300 megawatts (MW) by December 31, 2024; 650 MW by December 31, 2027; and 1,000 MW by December 31, 2030.

BLUE PLAN

HJ 53 Adoption of the Long Island Sound Blue Plan: **SUPPORT/PASSED**

Long Island Sound is the Northeast's largest estuary and is significant to more than 20 million people who live near the sound. There are growing demands for a wide range of commercial, recreational and conservation uses of the Sound.

Many years of work by advocates, scientists, and policy makers produced the Long Island Sound Blue Plan. The legislature's adoption of the Blue Plan gives Connecticut the authority to coordinate marine planning with the state of New York and will proactively protect the Sound while preserving its traditional uses. The plan ensures the protection of 14 "Ecologically Significant Areas" and protect 29 "Significant Human Use Areas" that support fishing, boating, and maritime commerce. The Blue Plan will inform future decisions on the impacts, projects and preservation of Long Island Sound.

VOTING RIGHTS

HJ 58 Resolution Proposing a State Constitutional Amendment to Allow No-Excuse Absentee Voting: **SUPPORT/PASSED**

Amending the State Constitution to permit no-excuse absentee voting will grant Connecticut citizens the freedom to choose how to vote, whether in person or by absentee ballot without an "excuse". 650,000 Voters took advantage of voting absentee during the 2020 elections when the need for social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic made in-person voting unsafe. Despite unfounded partisan claims of widespread voter fraud, citizens in Connecticut overwhelmingly embraced absentee voting as a welcome option that was temporarily provided by an emergency Executive Order. In 2021, state legislators passed HJ 58 (now Resolution Act 21-2) to give citizens the opportunity to amend our State Constitution to permanently allow "no-excuse absentee voting." However, the resolution will need to be passed again in 2023 before a Constitutional amendment can be offered to voters in 2024.

VOTING RIGHTS

HJ 59 Resolution Approving an Amendment to the State Constitution To Allow For Early Voting: **SUPPORT/PASSED**

Amending the Connecticut State Constitution to permit early voting is another important step to strengthen voter turnout and representation in Connecticut. While 43 states offer in-person early voting options, Connecticut is one of seven that do not. Allowing for people to vote early and on their own schedules ensures greater participation in the democratic process. HJ 59 (now Resolution Act 21-1) was adopted by state legislators for the second time this past session and will be on the ballot for voters to approve this November.

CLEAN AIR

HB 5419 Federal Clean Air Act Fee on Motor Vehicle Registrations: **SUPPORT/FAILED**

Transportation pollution accounts for 38% of total greenhouse gas emissions. HB 5419 would have directed 42.5% of federal Clean Air Act fees collected on motor vehicle registrations to a special account within the state budget dedicated to certain environmental purposes. The revenue could be invested in green transportation initiatives, such as bus system improvements, vehicle electrification, bike/walk paths and other programs that improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions.

VOTING RIGHTS

HB 6205 Revising Certain Absentee Voting Statutes: **SUPPORT/FAILED**

HB 6205 was an attempt to improve certain voting statutes that would not require a constitutional amendment. The Connecticut Constitution is overly limiting compared to many other states when it comes to ballot access. The current statute is even more limiting and was written to strictly interpret the options for voting by absentee ballot. Our Constitution currently allows voters access to absentee ballots because of "absence from the city or town of which they are inhabitants of" and because of "sickness." HB 6205 would have more clearly defined these reasons which would allow more citizens to vote by absentee ballot.

EPR

HB 6386 Extended Producer Responsibility for Tires, Smoke Detectors and Certain Gas Cylinders: **SUPPORT/FAILED**

HB 6386 sought to divert discarded items such as tires, smoke detectors and gas cylinders out of the state's solid waste stream. The bill would have required producers of these products to join a stewardship organization to manage the disposal of these products. Involving producers in product disposal is known as "Extended Producer Responsibility" (EPR) which incentivizes the design of products and packaging with the cost of disposal in mind. EPR requires manufacturers to take responsibility for their product and packaging through all life cycle stages, including disposal. EPR programs already exist in our state for electronics, paint, mattresses, and mercury thermostats. HB 6386 would have created three new EPR programs for tires (illegally dumped all over CT), smoke detectors (slightly radioactive) and gas cylinders (which can explode when processed at material recovery facilities). In addition to these specific items, DEEP is working on a major EPR program specific to packaging.

MUNICIPAL FUNDING OPTION

HB 6441 Climate Change Adaptation: **SUPPORT/PASSED without municipal option**

HB 6441 included new tools for Connecticut towns and cities to fight climate change and fund climate adaptation projects. A core component of the bill would have allowed municipalities to establish a buyer's conveyance fee to fund projects such as conserving open space, combating invasive species, testing for brownfield remediation, creating woodland trails, stewardship of urban parks, or other environmental projects that the town desired. HB 6441 was the only bill out of three climate-related bills proposed by Governor Lamont that passed, but legislative leaders publicly announced they were stripping out the Municipal Option section, which dramatically weakened the bill in the House.



A CLEAN ELECTRIC GRID

Connecticut and our regional neighbors have been talking about improving the criteria that our electric grid operator (ISO New England) uses to buy power. The grid operator should be required to purchase clean, renewable power that considers our state's climate goals. Right now, their only criteria are cost and reliability, which perpetuates our reliance on fossil fuels. New England states that buy electricity from the regional grid can use their collective purchasing power to reform the energy market and require the grid operator to prioritize climate impacts in its

PLASTICS

HB 6502 An Act Concerning The Use of Certain Polystyrene Products, The Availability of Single-Use Straws, Release of Certain Balloons and the Compostable Nature of Single-Use Produce Bags: SUPPORT/FAILED

HB 6502 was intended to phase out the use of certain polystyrene trays and food containers, prohibit the automatic distribution of single-use plastic straws at certain eating establishments, prohibit the intentional release of certain helium balloons and examine the compostable nature of certain single-use produce bags. The bill would have required every school district and educational institution to develop a plan to discontinue the use of products made with polystyrene. It would have also regulated the use of single-use plastics and other products based on their compostable nature.

COMPOSTING

HB 6503 Siting of Anaerobic Digestion Facilities on Farms: SUPPORT/PASSED

Roughly 500,000 tons of food waste enter Connecticut's municipal solid waste stream each year, equating to 23% of the state's municipal waste. HB 6503 was originally written to encourage the timely siting and permitting of anaerobic digesters on farms, which is not scored. However, this bill was merged with SB 930 to improve Connecticut's commercial composting program, which passed and is now Public Act 21-16. The new law lowers the tonnage threshold to capture more businesses, but did not remove the geographic limitation of being within 20 miles of an anaerobic digestion facility. Further changes to the program are

needed to remove exemptions for commercial industries like schools, stadiums, hospitals, restaurants, and food courts. The revised HB 6503 was only scored in the House and Senate.

AIR QUALITY/ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

HB 6551 An Act Concerning Environmental Air Quality: SUPPORT/FAILED

This legislation combined several important air quality initiatives into one bill, which was expanded to include Environmental Justice language and to take into account environmental and health burdens along with emissions standards in state permitting criteria. HB 6551 would have strengthened Connecticut's Environmental Justice law to prevent further polluting facilities (power plants, sewage treatment plants, trash incinerators, and landfills) from being placed in communities that are already overburdened.

Another section was added to the bill after legislators passed HB 6514 to incentivize construction of new, highly polluting data centers to be built in Connecticut. The Data Center bill was passed by "emergency certification" and therefore avoided the normal committee review and public hearing. The resulting law now allows for data centers to be built in CT with few restrictions on emissions or use of water resources. The law's potential impact on air quality as well as possible environmental justice siting concerns led to an effort to amend the Data Center law as part of HB 6551. ♦

IMPORTANT BILLS WITHOUT A SCORE

TREE CUTTING

SB 950 The Replacement of Public Utility Poles and Revising Vegetation Management Utility Protection Zones: OPPOSE/FAILED

SB 950 mandated a time frame for the placement of lines, conduits, cables, wires, and other equipment on replaced public utility poles, but went much further to give electric utilities unchecked power to cut down trees and bypass input from local Tree Wardens. The authority to remove vegetation extended into private and municipally owned land. The outcry from citizens across Connecticut successfully stopped the legislation and should give pause to lawmakers seeing similar legislation in 2022.

ATS SEWAGE

SB 961 Certain Sewage Disposal Systems and Alternative Sewage Treatment Systems: OPPOSE/FAILED

SB 961 gives the Department of Public Health (DPH) authority to approve ATS systems (Alternate Treatment Systems). These are "closed" standalone systems for treating wastewater. Developers want to be able to use ATS on sites that would otherwise be unbuildable for lack of sewage infrastructure (on steep or rocky slopes, close to wetland and wells). That policy would override wetlands law, because there is no demonstrable harm to wetlands if the system works as advertised and is discharging potable quality water. These systems can be useful for fixing existing sewage problems. The concern with ATS is that these systems are often not properly maintained and can cause damaging pollution to local water resources. DEEP has repeatedly voiced concern about similar proposed legislation. By statute, DPH is supposed to develop a regulatory program before it approves more ATS, and this legislation could have interfered with that requirement.

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COMMISSION

SB 966 The Metropolitan District Commission of Hartford County: SUPPORT/FAILED

The business model of our state's largest public water utility, the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), relies on increasing the sale of our public water resources to generate revenues rather than on a model that encourages water conservation. SB 966 would have required annual audits of the MDC's books by the Auditors of Public Accounts, established a task force to examine the organization and operations of the MDC, and required the board of commissioners to adopt, administer and enforce the model code of ethics for municipalities and special districts.

GREEN JOBS

SB 999 AN ACT CONCERNING A JUST TRANSITION TO CLIMATE-PROTECTIVE ENERGY PRODUCTION AND COMMUNITY INVESTMENT: SUPPORT/PASSED

SB 999 (Public Act 21-43) provides for a just transition to climate-protective energy production and community investment. The law requires a workforce development program for renewable energy projects and community benefits agreements with local representation. This is a big win for green jobs and equity in workforce development.

RANKED CHOICE VOTING

HB 5884 Establishing a Task Force to Study Ranked Choice Voting: SUPPORT/FAILED

Despite a long list of legislative co-sponsors in both the House and Senate, a bill to study Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) was not taken up in 2021. RCV is an election process that allows voters to rank candidates in order of preference. To win, candidates must receive a majority of votes cast. If no candidate gains a majority there are "instant runoffs" where voters who selected that candidate as their first choice will have their second choice votes counted. This continues until one candidate receives more than 50 percent of the votes cast. Because RCV requires a majority to win, it better represents the consensus of the electorate and should be examined as a possible election reform.



VOTING RIGHTS

HB 6325 The Secretary of the State, Absentee Ballots, and Election Audits: OPPOSE/FAILED

HB 6325 was a partisan attempt at voter suppression by constructing legal obstacles and undermining the authority of the Secretary of State. These provisions echo similar attempts in other states: Require the Secretary of the State to report on certain election laws modified or suspended for any primary or election held in 2020 or 2021; require any declaratory ruling, instruction, opinion or order of the Secretary to be adopted as a regulation and submitted to the Legislative Regulation Review Committee; prohibit the unsolicited mailing of absentee ballots by certain election officials; provide state-wide consistency regarding pre-election day processing of absentee ballots whenever authorized and prohibit registrars of voters from contacting voters for the purpose of curing unsigned absentee ballots; require the Secretary to establish a pilot program from the verification of signatures on returned absentee ballot envelopes, require that absentee ballot applications contain a statement regarding penalties for noncompliance with certain provisions; establish a task force to study the feasibility of single-envelope returns of absentee ballots; establish a working group to examine risk-limiting audits of election results; and change the deadline by which minor parties need to file their rules with the Secretary prior to nominating candidates for office.

HB 6325 was soundly rejected by our legislature, but proves that some of our lawmakers are still anxious to push voter suppression tactics in Connecticut.

CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION

HB 6619 The Development of a Kindergarten to Eighth Grade Model Curriculum: SUPPORT/FAILED

HB 6619 would have required a model climate change curriculum for grades kindergarten through eighth grade for use by local and regional boards of education. The implementation of climate change education has been an important initiative for several years, but has not been a priority for legislators, who are hesitant to increase education mandates. The legislation was offered again in 2021, and did not pass. However, the budget implementer (now Public Act 21-2) contained a step in the right direction. It requires the state to create a model curriculum in multiple subjects, including climate change, that school districts may use for grades K-8. The next step is to make sure it is required to be taught.

WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY

SB 701 The Bolton Lakes Regional Water Pollution Control Authority : OPPOSE/PASSED

This legislation (now Special Act 21-6) permits the Bolton Lakes Regional Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) to disregard protections under current state law and permit the expansion of the authority's wastewater system into the town of Coventry. It authorizes the WPCA to take any action necessary to implement such an expansion. Bypassing all public processes and environmental review should never be the solution to complex situations.

2021 LEGISLATIVE SCORECARD KEY

Lawmakers are scored alphabetically, and their votes are recorded in committees and chambers as applicable. Special elections for seats vacated during the session added new legislators and caused some changes in committee membership.

LEGEND

- Blank No vote recorded
- A** Absent or abstained
- ✓ Pro-environment vote
- ✗ Anti-environment vote

Please note: a pro-environment vote may be either a yes or no vote depending on the bill. An anti-environment vote may be the same.

ABBREVIATIONS

- H** House
- S** Senate
- APP** Appropriations Committee
- CE** Commerce Committee
- ENV** Environment Committee
- ET** Energy & Technology Committee
- FIN** Finance, Revenue, & Bonding Committee
- GAE** Government Administration & Elections Committee
- HSG** Housing Committee
- JUD** Judiciary Committee
- TRA** Transportation Committee



Rep. Bobby Gibson, Rep. Christine Palm, CTLCV Executive Director Lori Brown, and Sen. Christine Cohen attend the PFAS bill signing.



Advocates gather for the 2022 Climate Justice march in Hartford



TCI =
HEALTH.
JOBS.
CLIMATE.

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TCI =
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