



TESTIMONY **IN SUPPORT of HB 5285**
AAC THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM
March 3, 2022

To: Honored Chairs Sen. McCrory, Rep. Sanchez, and Distinguished Members of the Education Committee

From: Megan Macomber, Connecticut League of Conservation Voters

On behalf of the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters (CTLCV), thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony **IN SUPPORT of HB 5285** AAC The Public School Curriculum.

Last year's budget implementer, SB 1202, took the important step of requiring the Dept. of Education to develop climate change education curriculum consistent with the Next Generation Science Standards. Now Connecticut needs legislation requiring climate change to be taught in our public schools, along with all the other topics the statutes now mandate.

Young people are inheriting a planet that will look and act very different to the world that previous generations have grown up in. They will face **rising temperatures, increased rates of droughts, super storms, flooding, sea level rise, and environmental injustices**, yet have the least amount of influence and representation when it comes to passing climate legislation. **Requiring climate change education allows students to learn about the climate crisis and potential solutions throughout school rather than on their own.**

There are **no costs associated with curriculum development**, as the Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection has the expertise and resources necessary to advise the Dept. of Education curriculum development to local and regional school districts. While some insist that climate change is already being taught in our schools, that is simply not the case. According to 2019 NPR/Ipsos polling, **86 percent of teachers say kids should learn about climate change while only 42 percent teach it.**

Requiring **environmental education in our public schools is necessary to building education equity in Connecticut.** As environmental stressors increasingly impact childrens' home lives—whether it's related to housing instability, or other environmental and psychological impacts of climate change—their concerns and experiences will be carried over into the classroom. Connecticut is already experiencing a mental health crisis among youth. **Climate change curriculum can provide students with science based**

context, solutions, and job opportunities to help address the complex problems that our changing climate creates.

Children are our future, and climate change education is critical to equip them with the knowledge and skills they will need to tackle the impacts of global warming. We urge the committee to strongly support this bill so that Connecticut's young people have the knowledge they need to navigate a changing world and grow into our leaders of tomorrow.

Thank you for your consideration,

Megan Macomber, Policy Advocate
CT League of Conservation Voters,
553 Farmington Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105
ctlcv.org | ctlcv@ctlcv.org | 860-236-5442