

# Energy and Technology Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No:** HB-5248 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND TRANSMISSION

**Title:** PLANNING.

**Vote Date:** 3/17/2026

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 2/24/2026

**File No.:**

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

## SPONSORS OF BILL:

[Rep. Mary M. Mushinsky, 85th Dist.](#)

[Rep. Steven Winter, 94th Dist.](#)

[Rep. Nick Gauthier, 38th Dist.](#)

[Rep. Amy Morrin Bello, 28th Dist.](#)

## REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill addresses two major topics concerning energy efficiency and transmission planning. The first concerns energy efficiency standards with home products. ENERGY STAR, a federal program with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), is a federal program that identifies energy-efficient home products. This bill would create a voluntary energy efficiency certification program in Connecticut in the case that ENERGY STAR is terminated. This bill additionally updates DEEP's authority with regulating energy efficiency standards of products that are not already regulated with ENERGY STAR. The second concerns a clarification with the Connecticut Siting Council's purview, stating that the Siting Council has the authority to approve the siting of proactively planned transmission projects (transmission lines and substations). Additionally, this bill requires the Siting Council to factor in electric grid reliability needs when determining the approval or denial of certain facilities.

## RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Department of Energy and Environmental Protection \(DEEP\), Commissioner, Katie S. Dykes](#)

Katie S. Dykes, Commissioner of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, testified **in support** of House Bill 5248. She stated that Section 1 of the bill would allow DEEP to adopt efficiency standards for certain products and create a voluntary state certification program if the federal ENERGY STAR program ended, helping maintain energy

savings for consumers and businesses. DEEP additionally supports Sections 2 to 4, as updating DEEP's existing authority to regulate efficiencies of products not already regulated by the federal government would be beneficial. DEEP supports Section 5 of this bill, as its minor clarification eliminates confusion regarding whether the Siting Council has authority to approve the siting of proactively planned transmission projects.

**Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC), Consumer Counsel, Claire E. Coleman**

Claire E. Coleman, Consumer Counsel for the Office of Consumer Counsel, testified in **support** of House Bill 5248, specifically the provision that allows the Connecticut Siting Council to consider future electric grid needs when determining the public benefits of transmission infrastructure. OCC supports sections 1-4, which includes efforts to enable consumers to utilize the most efficient appliance products. OCC additionally supports Section 5, as it further specifies that the Siting Council should prioritize future electric grid reliability when making considerations on facility benefits to the public.

**Connecticut Siting Council, Executive Director, Melanie A. Bachman**

Melanie A. Bachman, Executive Director of the Connecticut Siting Council, testified in opposition to H.B. 5248. She raised concerns about the bill's proposal to redefine ["public need"] for electric transmission lines and substations to include anticipated future grid reliability needs identified in the state's Integrated Resource Plan.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

**United Illuminating, Vice President of Regulatory, Christie Prescott**

Christie Prescott, Vice President of Regulatory for United Illuminating, she supports while also raising concerns about municipal aggregation, accelerated supplier switching, and natural gas rate studies, citing operational, regulatory, and consumer protection risks, while supporting forward-looking transmission planning under House Bill 5248 to enhance grid reliability, integrate renewables, and ensure proactive infrastructure investment.

**Connecticut Water Works Association, Representative, Elizabeth Gara**

Elizabeth Gara, representing the Connecticut Water Works Association, is in support of House Bill 5248. She stated that the bill would allow the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to adopt efficiency standards for products that promote water conservation. Then, she explained that more efficient appliances and fixtures such as low flow toilets and showerheads help protect Connecticut's water resources and reduce water and energy use, supporting long term public health and sustainability goals.

**The Nature Conservancy, Climate and Energy Policy Manager, Cary Lynch**

Cary Lynch, Climate and Energy Policy Manager, testified in support of House Bill 5248. And stated that the bill would allow the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to maintain and expand energy efficiency standards.

**Connecticut Citizen Action Group, Executive Director, Tom Swan**

Tom Swan, Executive Director of the Connecticut Citizen Action Group, testified on several energy and technology bills. He strongly supported studying the design of residential electric bills, noting that mislabeling charges has led to confusion and unfair criticism of low-income and clean energy programs. Also urged eliminating tax incentives for data centers.

**Connecticut League of Conservation Voters, Deputy Director, Connor Yakaitis**

Connor Yakaitis, Deputy Director of the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters, testified in support of House Bill 5248. He highlighted that the bill ensures Connecticut can maintain strong energy efficiency standards even if federal programs like Energy Star are eliminated, helping families save on energy bills and reduce emissions.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Carrier Group, Inc., Vice President, Johnny Carrier**

Johnny Carrier, Vice President of Carrier Group, Inc., and a professional engineer, is in opposition to House Bill 5248. He argued that the bill would allow the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to adopt standards that bypass the State Building Code process & Standards Committee, which normally reviews such requirements with input from multiple stakeholders.

**Calcagni Real Estate, Broker and COO, Jennifer DeVivo**

Jennifer DeVivo, Broker, and COO of Calcagni Real Estate, testified in opposition to House Bill 5248. She stated that these standards would effectively function as building code mandates affecting systems such as HVAC, water heaters, and plumbing fixtures. She warned that adopting them outside the existing process could limit product availability, increase construction costs, and add complexity for residential development.

**House of Hanbury Builders, Inc., Representative, Alan Hanbury**

Alan Hanbury, a remodeling contractor is in opposition to House Bill 5248. He argued that the bill would allow efficiency standards that bypass the State Building Code. Then he warned that these requirements could increase costs and limit product availability & add complexity for remodeling residential construction.

**Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM)**

The Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers testified in opposition to House Bill 5248. The organization argued that appliance efficiency standards should remain at the federal level to maintain a consistent national marketplace. AHAM expressed concern that creating state-specific standards or a replacement for the [ENERGY STAR] program could increase costs.

**Mannarino Builders Inc., President, Robert Mannarino**

Robert Mannarino, is in opposition to House Bill 5248. He argued that additional regulations and efficiency standards increase the cost of housing, citing that roughly 25% of a home's cost comes from overregulation. then urged lawmakers to oppose the bill.

**Central Connecticut Construction Management, LLC., Owner, Kenneth Mita**

Kenneth Mita, owner of Central Connecticut Construction Management is in opposition to House Bill 5248. He warned that these requirements could limit product availability and make affordable housing and workforce housing, and multifamily projects more expensive, undermining efforts to address Connecticut's housing crisis.

**Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Connecticut, Chief Executive Officer, Jim Perras**

Jim Perras, CEO of the Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Connecticut, testified in opposition to House Bill 5248. He argued that the bill would allow DEEP to override the State

Building Code and that this could increase construction costs while limiting product availability, setting a dangerous precedent for future regulatory overreach.

**State Government Affairs for the Air-Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Institute, Senior Director, Petra Smeltzer**

Petra Smeltzer, Senior Director of State Government Affairs for the Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute, testified in opposition to House Bill 5248 unless amended. Explaining that the bill could conflict with federal energy efficiency standards, which prevent states from creating different rules for covered heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and water heating products. Emphasizing that having uniform-standards is essential for manufacturers to design and certify equipment efficiently.

**Robert Turner Builders LCC, Turner Painting Service, Inc., Managing Partner, President, Robert Turner**

Robert Turner, Managing Partner of Robert Turner Builders LLC and President of Turner Painting Service, Inc., testified in opposition to House Bill 5248. arguing that expanding regulatory authority outside the established State Building Code undermines regulatory stability and even creates enforcement confusion.

**Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers, Representative, John Keane**

John Keane, representing the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers, testified in opposition to House Bill 5248, saying that the home appliance industry relies on consistent, nationwide federal standards, a state-led program could create conflicting requirements and raise costs.

**Realtor, Cheshire, CT, Joel Grossman**

Joel Grossman, a realtor, testified in opposition to House Bill 5248. He argued that the bill would add unnecessary requirements and override existing building codes also saying developers and builders already incorporate energy efficiency into their projects and warned that additional regulations could worsen Connecticut's housing affordability challenges.

**GENERAL COMMENTS:**

**Harland Christofferson**

Harland Christofferson submitted testimony as General Comments expressing concerns about House Bill 5248. While he supports the goal of conserving energy and water, he cautioned that expanding the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's authority to adopt efficiency standards for appliances and plumbing fixtures could have unintended consequences.

**Reported by: Jadon MacCormack, Abigail  
Lockwood**

**Date: March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026**