



September 8, 2020

Comments from SolarConnecticut to Connecticut General Assembly's Energy & Technology Committee on LCO No. 3920 AN ACT CONCERNING EMERGENCY RESPONSE BY ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES AND REVISING THE REGULATION OF OTHER PUBLIC UTILITIES.

Hello. My name is Jeff Pipeling and I am the Director of Business Development at CTEC Solar. Thank you to the Energy and Technology Committee members and a special thank you to Representatives Bill Petit and Josh Elliott for listening to my concerns back in the spring before the shut down. We are in our 10<sup>th</sup> year in business in CT in a challenging industry and are one of the only commercial solar developers in CT that also builds projects with our own CT employees. We also build for other developers and have completed the only Community Solar Project in CT to date as well as many Virtual Net metering projects. These projects help keep CT workers employed, give added tax revenue to municipalities, and offer millions of dollars in energy bill savings to cities and towns all over CT.

We have been developing Virtual Net Metering projects as we do each year in anticipation of the VNM program being expanded. With only a once a year procurement for the Renewable Energy Credits, we have anticipated the Virtual Net Metering program being expanded and have invested significant funds in developing projects for many major cities and towns. We currently have waitlisted VNM applications for the City of Hartford, the City of New Britain, City of Meriden, City of Bristol, and Town of North Caanan. CTEC is in support of this bill 3920. We have experienced incredible delays in our interconnection process for delayed studies that are required by Eversource. They continually give us the excuse "everyone is on storm duty" for not completing their engineering studies we pay extraordinary funds for that so they cannot complete our studies on time. It seems from our perspective that Eversource is constantly understaffed and cannot perform their regular duties in interconnection applications if and when any storm related event occurs.

Though having delays in projects may not be as severe as losing power for weeks, and we sympathize with all of our fellow CT residents that were effected, including many of our employees, our industry will be hurt far greater with unemployment if we do not have jobs to send our people to if this VNM does not get expanded this fall. While being supportive of LCO No. 3920, we are very concerned that if this is the only bill that the Energy and Technology committee takes up this year, and Virtual Net Metering is not added, that waiting until next spring will strand many projects from being able to move forward, resulting in lost savings for municipalities, tax revenue, losses to our company as well as potential layoffs by this winter if we do not have these projects to build.

We also have ZREC/LREC applications in the queue that need the Virtual Net Metering program in order to proceed, meaning if VNM expansion is tabled and not added to this bill or to another bill, many of



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these REC bids will have to be let go resulting in higher cost REC projects, which is not the goal is competitive procurement. In a time when every dollar counts for the local economy, municipalities are facing shortfalls in funding, and CT needs to keep our residents working, expanding the Virtual Net Metering program to approve the full waitlist and add more capacity to develop through next year so we are not stalled again in the Spring, is the right thing to do for our communities and the State.

Thank you,

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