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The Sierra Club Connecticut Chapter is opposed to Substitute Senate Bill #1078- “An Act Concerning Affordable and Reliable Energy” for the following reasons:

- 1) It shifts the cost of fracked gas infrastructure from the electric companies to ratepayers.** We already pay for electricity. We would bear the costs for operating the infrastructure that is designed to carry gas primarily for export, not for public necessity. The pipeline owners and operators are publicly traded, for profit entities. This bill cost shifts from for-profit corporations to the public, which provides a better bottom line to the corporation.
- 2) The bill transfers authority to develop energy proposals from the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP).** Although PURA has itself been criticized by the environmental community, giving DEEP this much direct authority for energy proposals is downright scary. DEEP wrote #1078. DEEP is right now in the process of permitting new fracked gas intrastate pipeline without any environmental assessments whatsoever. A part owner of one of the proposed interstate pipelines is Eversource, formerly CL&P. DEEP in collaboration with Eversource and other for-profit electric companies, wrote the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), which plans the state’s energy future, and is geared largely toward increasing the capacity of fracked gas in our state. DEEP is a strong ally to the electric and gas industries, and this bill would grant them a free hand to continue to benefit fracked gas infrastructure, to the detriment of the development of clean and renewable wind and solar energy.
- 3) The bill contains a provision to force the automatic approval of DEEP developed energy proposals if PURA doesn't issue a decision within 60 days.** Automatic approvals for fracked gas pipelines mean no environmental assessments will be done. It means public opportunity for input would be truncated.
- 4) Methane is a dangerous greenhouse gas which regulatory agencies are grossly underestimating.** The following quote is from a letter numerous scientists and scholars sent to the EPA, DOE, and other government entities:
“As evidence continues to mount that serious climate change impacts are already upon us, research indicates that mitigation of short-lived pollutants such as methane can play a significant role in slowing the rate of climate change, while producing many co-benefits for human health and food security. To support the accurate evaluation of the benefits of methane mitigation, the Administration and agencies should develop a two-track strategy directed at limiting both long-term warming and the near-term rate of warming. Doing this requires using the GWP for methane (and other short-lived warming agents) that accurately reflects the latest science and provides decision-makers the best possible understanding of and options for addressing both near- and long-term climate change and disruption: specifically, a 20-year GWP of 86 and a 100-year GWP of 34.” Residents of Connecticut have been told that new pipeline is needed because there is a “scarcity” of fracked gas. In fact, there is a glut of methane on the market, depressing prices. Due to the glut, the electric companies want to be able to use more methane for power, because it will be cheaper in the short term. However, export of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) will cause prices of domestically fracked gas to increase. The argument that fracked gas is affordable is specious, as the gas is planned largely for export, which increases prices, and the environmental costs are not measured. Fracked methane gas is not reliable, as it is unknown how long the shale gas boom will last, but the current estimate is at most 20 years.

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