

**For Immediate Release:
May 5, 2008**

Contacts: See End

Environmental Groups and Legislators Applaud Passage of Connecticut Global Warming Solutions Act *Historic legislation creates mandatory pollution caps*

Hartford – Leading Connecticut environmental organizations joined legislators in celebrating final passage in the Senate of *An Act Concerning Connecticut Global Warming Solutions* (HB 5600) today. The bill caps emissions of global warming pollution and requires emissions cuts to 10% below 1990 levels by 2020 and 80% emissions reductions from 2001 levels by 2050. The bill now goes to Governor Rell for her signature.

“This bill builds upon the success of the 2004 landmark legislation, *An Act Concerning Climate Change* which created emissions goals for Connecticut. This bill makes the goals mandatory and requires state agencies to implement the necessary policies and regulations to cut emissions to achieve the needed reductions” said state Senator Ed Meyer.

Connecticut is the fifth state after California, New Jersey, Hawaii and Washington, to adopt mandatory limits on global warming pollution. Meanwhile, the United States Congress is beginning debate on federal legislation that builds upon these state actions.

Mandatory global warming pollution caps are a response to warnings from the scientific community that emissions cuts are necessary in order to avoid the most dangerous impacts of global warming. The scientific consensus suggests that avoiding those impacts requires cutting emissions 15% to 20% by 2020 and 80% or more by 2050.

Senator John McKinny stated “Connecticut has demonstrated leadership in passing this important legislation. If every state decided that it was too small to have an impact on climate change, or that it must wait for others to act, we will fail to address what is one of the gravest threats we face.”

“Connecticut and the states are setting the bar for Congress as it debates nationwide limits on global warming pollution,” said Environment Connecticut Program Director, Christopher Phelps. “While some voices in our nation’s capitol push a go-slow approach, state leaders are stepping up and doing what’s necessary to begin the task doing what the science tells us is necessary to stop global warming.”

In addition to mandatory statewide emissions limits, the bill includes provisions directing state agencies to investigate and implement actions to achieve the caps and to begin addressing the impacts of climate change. The legislation:

- Requires the Department of Environmental Protection to inventory emissions and recommend strategies to reduce emission. Then every three years beginning in 2012, publish a schedule of specific actions previously taken and proposed to reduce emissions, and show reasonable further progress towards meeting the caps.

“In 2004 and 2005, Connecticut established one of the first state goals and climate change action plans in the nation. Unfortunately, those efforts haven’t produced the necessary pollution cuts,” said Roger Smith, Campaign Director for Clean Water Action. “This law gets Connecticut back on track by requiring DEP to show regular progress towards mandatory emissions limits.”

- Directs the Governor’s Steering Committee on Climate Change to establish a subcommittee to assess climate change impacts on the state and recommend measures to mitigate such impacts.

“This legislation creates a critical mechanism for Connecticut to better prepare for the very serious impacts that sea level rise and other effects of climate change will have on our human and natural communities” remarked David Sutherland, Director of Government Relations for The Nature Conservancy. “Over the next few decades, we’re likely to lose neighborhoods and important coastal wetlands to sea level rise. The strategies that will be developed as a result of this bill will help our citizens and wildlife better adapt to these threats.”

- Requires the Department of Transportation to investigate expansion of high-speed and light rail train systems serving Connecticut. The bill also directs DEP to investigate a low-carbon fuel standard to reduce the carbon content of fuels.

“There are many practical steps Connecticut can, and must, take to cut global warming pollution,” said Jessie Stratton, Deputy Director for Environment Northeast. “This bill creates a framework to achieve mandatory cuts in carbon emissions to ensure that our children inherit a livable planet.”

- Directs DEP to investigate additional market-based compliance mechanisms, such as expanded cap-and-trade programs, to achieve emissions reductions.

Proponents of the legislation expect the bill to ensure Connecticut remains a leader in the state and national effort to stop global warming. It establishes firm, mandatory global warming pollution limits for the state, creates a practical framework for reducing emissions to meet those limits, and ensures that Connecticut does its part to achieve the global warming pollution reductions that the science says are necessary.

“We have a moral obligation to adopt responsible environmental policies and be good stewards of our rivers, land, and air. A sustainable future depends upon our ability to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It is just that clear,” said Charles Rothenberger, a staff attorney for Connecticut Fund for the Environment.

Environmental organizations who have worked tirelessly to support this legislation include Clean Water Action, Connecticut Fund for the Environment, Environment Connecticut, Environment Northeast, and The Nature Conservancy. There are over 40 supporting organizations supporting this legislative campaign.

Contacts

Clean Water Action
Roger Smith
860-232-6232

Connecticut Fund for the Environment
Charles Rothenberger
203-787-0646, ext. 110

Environment Connecticut
Christopher Phelps
860-231-8842

Environment Northeast
Jessie Stratton 860-983-4046

The Nature Conservancy
David Sutherland
860-344-0716, ext. 317

###