



Climate Updates - October 2023

All around us we see unprecedented – yet entirely predictable, catastrophic results of climate change. It is critical, that we all take immediate steps to address and solve this crisis.

Our communities and the world are grappling with a collective failure to act swiftly and boldly on the climate emergency. Without an end to climate change, nothing else will matter.

Updates and Moving Forward:

On September 17th, CCAG members and allies rallied alongside 75,000 individuals at the March to End Fossil Fuels in New York City. This event preceded the groundbreaking UN Climate Ambition Summit. The collective energy and determination of this mobilization were awe-inspiring. We united to call on President Joe Biden to halt approvals for fossil fuel projects, reduce oil and gas drilling, declare a climate emergency, and ensure a just transition away from fossil fuels.

Immediate action is imperative to prevent vast regions of our planet from becoming uninhabitable. We require an unprecedented emergency shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources. The more we burn oil, gas, and coal, the more we pollute our air, intensify heatwaves, fires, and floods, all while enriching wealthy fossil fuel CEOs at the expense of our communities' well-being.

President Biden possesses the authority to stop this devastation by ceasing the expansion of fossil fuels, thereby ensuring clean air, water, and improved health and safety for all. Visit ccag.net for next steps.

CCAG is set to launch a comprehensive campaign to ensure that Connecticut remains at the forefront of climate action. We are collaborating with allies to release a report targeting state-level leaders and insurance companies. We urge Connecticut to match the strides of neighboring states such as Maine, which demonstrates the viability of heat pumps in cold weather, and Massachusetts, a leader in solar power adoption. Our message is clear: time is running out, and Connecticut must lead!

The State Insurance Department's third annual Conference on Climate Change and Insurance (C4I) is scheduled for November. It will focus on actions taken by legislators, regulators, industry professionals, and stakeholders to address climate risks within the insurance sector. Sam Dynowski from the Connecticut Sierra Club will be a panelist discussing sustainability. CCAG and its partners advocated for this conference, which provides a vital opportunity to raise awareness and collect essential data regarding the insurance industry's role in climate disasters.

This November, CCAG's partner organization, Insure Our Future (IOF), will unveil its annual scorecard on Insurance, Fossil Fuels, and the Climate Emergency. This report evaluates 30 leading primary insurers and reinsurers, assessing their policies on insuring and investing in coal, oil, and gas. CCAG has been a key IOF contributor for years, emphasizing the transformative nature of this work. Hartford, known as the insurance capital of the world, and Connecticut hold a unique position in exposing insurance companies that contribute to the climate crisis, threatening not only the planet but also their own financial stability. CCAG, its members, and allies are committed to informing the public and holding these companies accountable. Stay tuned for the scorecard's release and transformative actions by CCAG and its partners.

Crucial regulations to curb car and truck emissions in Connecticut have been proposed. These regulations are indispensable in addressing the climate crisis and improving air quality. However, a group linked to the Koch brothers has been mobilizing opposition to these sensible regulations. Connecticut has the region's poorest air quality, with nearly 40% of greenhouse gas emissions originating from car and truck exhaust. This poses a severe threat to our planet and the air we breathe, with the most significant impacts felt in low-income and

minority communities. At this time, it is up to the Regulatory Review Committee to approve the proposed regulations. For updates and to take action, visit ccag.net. The final ruling is expected soon.

Progress:

On August 25th the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) made the final decision on United Illuminating's electric rate hike request. In a press release, they said "PURA rejects The United Illuminating Company's proposed distribution rate increase of \$131 million over three years. Instead, the Final Decision authorizes an increase of \$22.957 million." PURA also rejected UI's request for an extension to make their case. There is no doubt that everyone who took action helped this to happen. Thank you!

In the last rate case UI promised to clean up English Station, which they never did. Our state has finally held them accountable. Now there is precedent that utility companies will not be able to continue to enjoy increasing profits from Connecticut residents especially in environmental justice communities when they refuse to meet their previous legal and financial obligations. UI is challenging PURA's decision in court. We remain vigilant.

2023 Legislative victories:

In Connecticut, environmental justice communities will get \$125 million to make homes more energy efficient thanks to the successful passage of bonding bill [HB 6942](#). This will yield energy efficiency work and improved health for those in our cities who have borne the brunt of environmental racism.

[SB 1147](#) AAC the Environmental Justice Program of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. Strengthens our state's environmental justice law. It provides DEEP and the Connecticut Siting Council with the ability to deny permits for facilities that would worsen pollution in already overburdened areas. It also enables more participation by residents on the public health and environmental stressors in the community.

[SB 100](#) AAC Establishing an Account in the General Fund to Provide Grants to Towns that Need PFAS Testing and Remediation. This will be very helpful for dealing with earlier problems. But failing to do more to prevent future poisonings will only necessitate the allocation of more resources in the future while unnecessarily impacting the health of countless people. We strongly urged that this bill be amended, but still consider this a victory.

Partial Victory. [SB 7](#) AAC Strengthening Protections for Connecticut's Consumers of Energy. CCAG had been supporting this bill, which is supposed to help ratepayers. And while it does have some good things, it now contains a totally unrelated rat: an amendment which makes new nuclear plants Class I renewable energy sources for the next 2 years.

The amendment changed the state's Renewable Portfolio Standard, a mechanism designed to promote solar power and other renewable energy sources, to include new nuclear power plants built in our state (new nuclear reactors on the Millstone site were authorized in legislation in 2022) Regardless of how you feel about nuclear energy, support should not come at the expense of renewables.

These are just a few highlights, for more info, visit our website, join our email list, view our social media pages or contact:

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