

# October 27, 2022 Connecticut Workshop: Opportunities to Improve How Regulatory Agencies Address Climate Change

## Workshop Goals & Outcomes

Brown University engaged Synapse Energy Economics and Climable to host a series of workshops in New England states. The purpose of these workshops is to collaborate and crowdsource ideas from stakeholders on the opportunities and challenges for regulatory agencies implementing lasting and equitable climate and energy solutions.

The effort includes:

- [a background report](#) to summarize research about best practices, barriers, and opportunities across New England states.
- [public workshops](#) in each state to gather stakeholder input and facilitate collaboration on solutions.
- a final report to accumulate and enable action on lessons learned and next steps for all New England states.

## WORKSHOP AGENDA

3:00-3:05	Welcome & Logistics
3:05-3:25	Briefing on the Project and Connecticut's First Workshop
3:25-4:10	Breakout Session #1: Brainstorm on Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) Actions
4:10-4:55	Breakout Session #2: Brainstorm on Support for Other Stakeholders
4:55-5:00	Wrap Up, Next Steps, & Distribute E-Survey

## SUMMARY OF PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS WORKSHOP

The following is a summary of the priorities and actions from the in-person workshop in your state. Please note that the summary is two pages.

Priorities	Actions
<b>Promote Equity and Environmental Justice</b>	A. Equity goals and standards should be mandated.
	B. State agencies should secure participation from a diverse group and empower, rather than inform, the public.
	C. BIPOC leaders doing advocacy work should be funded equitably.
	D. There should be intervenor funding for PURA dockets.
	E. Multilingual, culturally competent communication is necessary to ensure everyone has access to information and can participate.
	F. The state should invest in individual- and community-level action by compensating people to get involved and submit ideas (e.g., time off, a tax break, a stipend).
	G. A Civilian Climate Corp should be created to encourage community action and build relationships between activists in a community.
	H. There are many vacancies on public boards and commissions that should be filled.
	I. Connecticut should retain talent and develop a workforce to support the energy transition.
	J. Industries should be directed to generate employment and other benefits for the residents of the areas they are developing in.

Priorities	Actions (cont'd)
Strengthen Leadership and Coordination	K. The public should be educated on the climate-related topics and their importance. Legislators and decision makers should be educated on the topics they are voting on.
	L. Greenhouse gas emissions targets should be updated to reflect the urgency of meeting the goals.
	M. There should be more collaboration between PURA and The Department of Energy and Environment (DEEP).
	N. Non-government and government leaders in Connecticut should reignite their commitment to the Transportation Climate Initiative (TCI).
Establish Authority, Accountability, and Enforcement	O. Connecticut should have an accountability mechanism if goals are not met.
	P. Public utilities should remain transparent in their use of funds from ratepayers, especially regarding the use of ratepayer funding for lobbying activities.
	Q. DEEP, the siting council within DEEP, and other regulatory agencies should have the power and support to strengthen their mechanisms and enforce their rules.
	R. People should be able to hold the government accountable for lack of action.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This workshop is designed to further develop the actions shown in the table above. Please reference this table as you work with others to develop responses to these questions.

1. What steps should the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) take to address the actions equitably?
2. Please select a few actions from the table. How can stakeholders (outside of the PURA) be empowered to meaningfully engage and lead on these actions?

## CLIMATE GOALS & PROGRESS

Connecticut has a legally binding goal to reduce emissions by 45 percent below the baseline by 2030 and 80 percent by 2050. As of 2018, Connecticut achieved a reduction of 18 percent. In recent years, Connecticut legislators increased the greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets and Renewable Portfolio Standards. The state also has an energy storage requirement and energy efficiency savings target of 1 percent of annual sales.

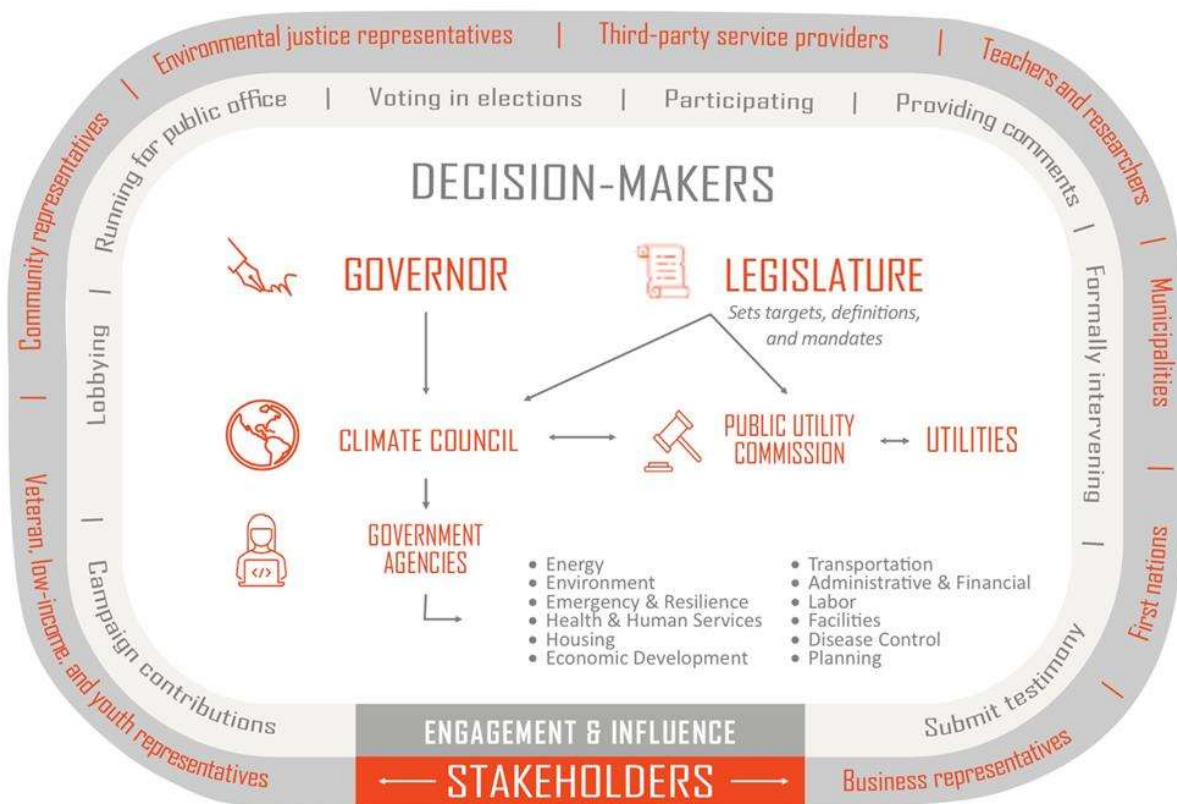
**Table 1: New England State Climate Goals and Achievements**

Climate Goals		CT	ME	MA	NH	RI	VT
Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Goals	Baseline	2001	1990	1990	None	1990	1990
	By 2030	45% (18%, 2018 act.)	45% (18%, 2017 act.)	50% ( 22%, 2018 act.)		45% (-2%, 2018 act.)	40% (0.51%, 2019 est.)
	By 2050	80%	80%	100%		100%	80%
Renewable Portfolio Standards		40% (by 2030)	80% (by 2030) 100% (by 2050)	40% (by 2030)	25% (by 2025)	100% (by 2033)	75% (by 2032)
Energy Efficiency Savings Targets (% of Total Sales)		1.1% (2019-2021)	2.3% (2020-2022)	2.7% (2019-2021)	0.6% (2022 est.)	2.5% (2018-2021)	2.4% (2018-2020)
Energy Storage Requirements		1,000 MW (by 2030)	300 MW (by 2025) 400 MW (by 2030)	1,000 MWh (by 2025)	None	None	None

*Source: Synapse Energy Economics. (2022). A Better New England Regulatory Framework for Mitigating Climate Change. Available at: <https://www.synapse-energy.com/project/study-climate-action-and-public-utility-commissions-new-england-states>. Updated 8/31/2022.*

# CLIMATE DECISION-MAKERS AND STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR ENGAGEMENT AND INTERACTIONS

During this discussion, it will be important to consider the entities in each state that have power and influence, what their sphere of influence is, and what mechanisms they use to exert their influence. The figure below provides a generalized depiction of the various entities that may be involved in climate decision-making. It is important to note that this figure is not state-specific, and some entities such as Climate Councils may not be present in every state. One of the key points shown here is that Public Utility Commissions, the core regulators of electricity and gas utilities, are central to state climate action.



Source: Synapse Energy Economics. (2022). *A Better New England Regulatory Framework for Mitigating Climate Change*. Available at: <https://www.synapse-energy.com/project/study-climate-action-and-public-utility-commissions-new-england-states>.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Acronym	Name	Definition
<b>DER</b>	Distributed Energy Resource	Technology for generating and managing electricity at the place of consumption
<b>DR</b>	Demand Response	Reducing energy consumption on the consumer side during peak demand
<b>DSM</b>	Demand-Side Management	Managing demand for energy on the consumer side to reduce overall consumption
<b>DSP</b>	Distribution System Planning	Planning for the incorporation of DERs into the grid, oftentimes by improving grid flexibility
<b>FERC</b>	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	An independent agency that regulates the interstate transmission of electricity, natural gas, and oil. FERC also reviews proposals to build liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals and interstate natural gas pipelines as well as licensing hydropower projects.
<b>FIT</b>	Feed-In Tariff	A policy guaranteeing a price for each unit of renewable energy generated
<b>ISO</b>	Independent System Operator	An independent organization that coordinates, controls, and monitors the operation of the electrical power system. New England's system operator is ISO New England (ISO-NE)
<b>PIM</b>	Performance Incentive Mechanism	A policy that encourages utility performance in areas such as reliability, safety, customer service, and energy efficiency
<b>PTC</b>	Production Tax Credit	Federal tax credit that incentivizes renewable generation
<b>REC</b>	Renewable Energy Certificate	Certificate representing renewable energy generation that utilities must purchase to fulfill RPS requirements
<b>RGGI</b>	Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative	A cooperative, market-based effort among the states of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Virginia to cap and reduce CO2 emissions from the power sector
<b>RPS</b>	Renewable Portfolio Standard	A regulation requiring increased production in renewable energy, usually involving a percentage goal by a specified year

**Sources:**

1. Harvey, Hal, Robbie Orvis, and Jeffrey Rissman. *Designing Climate Solutions: A Policy Guide for Low-Carbon Energy*. Island Press. November 2018. Available at: <https://islandpress.org/books/designing-climate-solutions>
2. American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy website. Available at: [www.aceee.org](http://www.aceee.org)
3. Synapse Energy Economics website. Available at: [www.synapse-energy.com](http://www.synapse-energy.com)
4. Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative website. Available at: [www.rggi.org](http://www.rggi.org)
5. King, Dawn. *Energy Policy and Politics*. Brown University Class.