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Connecticut DEEP Announces a New Comprehensive Energy Strategy For 2022

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by Lee D. Hoffman and Liana Feinn

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) is charged by statute with periodically preparing and implementing a Comprehensive Energy Strategy (CES). Each CES aims to identify the state's future energy needs, cost reduction opportunities, reliability concerns, and public health and environmental impacts of the energy sector DEEP can foresee at the time. The CES should also include strategies to increase affordability of heating and cooling for Connecticut residents and address inequities for low-income communities, reduce greenhouse gas emissions pursuant to the state's emissions targets, and improve energy resilience to extreme weather events and fuel price spikes. For the 2022 CES, DEEP will consider workforce development to grow the decarbonized, green economy as well. While DEEP is just starting to develop its 2022 CES, the 2013 CES and 2018 CES are available on DEEP's website.

DEEP intends to engage stakeholders in the 2022 CES development process through public hearings, technical meetings, and opportunities for written comments. As it crafts its 2022 CES, DEEP has indicated that it would like to evaluate modeling work that other northeastern states have prepared to address those issues that DEEP is now evaluating in its latest CES. DEEP is therefore asking stakeholders to advise it of modeling studies that DEEP should consider. DEEP will also be paying particular attention to such information that has been prepared by natural gas and electric distribution companies. In crafting its 2022 CES, DEEP will be looking for stakeholder input on five broad categories: climate, equity, affordability, economic development and resilience.

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To begin the process of developing the CES, DEEP will be hosting a meeting at 9:00 a.m., on Thursday, February 17, 2022, to obtain information on the scope of the CES. DEEP will be accepting comments during that meeting, which will be conducted via Zoom. To join, register using this link.

The meeting will identify key research questions that will focus the CES analysis. Topics include equitable approaches to decarbonization of the energy sector, identification of appropriate quantitative modeling studies to rely on, key policy issues involved with thermal decarbonization and energy affordability including specific approaches for affordable housing, natural gas expansion and the future of natural gas, decarbonization of delivered fuels, strategies to promote deployment of renewable resources and maximize the co-benefits of public health, economic development, and housing security, decarbonization of state buildings, and workforce transition and development issues. Further topics include decarbonization of industrial thermal processes, greenhouse gas accounting for biofuels, resilience to extreme weather events and electric vehicle charging, reliability strategies to address issues with distributed generation, active demand response, storage, gas demand response, retaining carbon-free resources, and identification of any necessary wholesale market reform. Updates to the Electric Vehicle Roadmap and the Integrated Resources Plan will be addressed, including emerging technology and its role in meeting Connecticut's climate objectives.

Written comments may also be filed electronically via the Energy Filings web page or emailed to DEEP directly at DEEP.EnergyBureau@ct.gov on or before March 3, 2022, by 4:00 p.m. All submitted materials will be posted on the DEEP website.

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