

## Summary of Comments CT Summit on Business Sustainability, December 7, 2010

The *CT Summit on Business Sustainability* was held on December 7, 2010 at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford, co-hosted by CT DEP Commissioner Amey Marrella and CBIA President John Rathgeber. Over 250 people attended the summit. Summit attendees were asked to complete comment cards responding to the question below. The exact comments received on the 47 comment cards submitted are listed below (some cards included multiple comments under different topic areas). Some of these comments were raised and discussed during the Listening Session at the summit. View [CT- Network video recording of the Listening Session](#). View webpage containing [all summit information](#).

The comment cards provided input on the following question: **What programs, policies, incentives, or other initiatives should the State of Connecticut pursue to better support the sustainability efforts of Connecticut businesses?**

### Financial Incentives

- As a business owner in an emerging market, one aspect that prohibits my growth is of course, the BET (Business Entity Tax). What changes can we expect in the near future to encourage growth through BET incentives?
- Create incentives for investment funds to focus on CT-based infrastructure to improve productivity of local workers and build in low carbon, lean future (i.e., we need to compete with cheaper capital as well as ring to reduce labor costs!)
- I would like to see the state provide more incentives for businesses to go green in the form of tax breaks, rebates, and recognition.
- Give tax credits to large and small businesses that not only promote green efforts in their facility, but advertise outside of their companies to general public.
- How can manufacturers be enticed to locate and stay in CT?
- Tax incentives, rebates, credits.
- 0% or 1% financing 10, 20, 30 years.
- Incentives.

### Legislation

- Pass enabling legislation for Energy Saving Performance Contracting, fostering use by all State and Municipal agencies.
- Senate Bill 493.

### Workforce

- Recognizing that there are “other” sustainable avenues outside of alternative energy that could use assistance in the form of funding opportunities.
- Create green jobs without need for upfront capital.

### Energy Efficiency

- Be consistent with all programs, e.g., CEEF (CT Energy Efficiency Fund).
- Support energy audits and clean energy programs for CT companies to drive energy efficiency and sustainability program.

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- Support building energy efficiency upgrades (and homes).
- Teach "intro to commercial energy efficiency through EPA Energy Star program." Looking for a partner.

### Solar

- I would like to see the proliferation and creation of Solar Renewable Energy Certificates for solar in this state, similar to the programs in MA and NJ.
- Adopt NABCEP (North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners) standards for solar certifications.
- Solar SREC (Solar Renewable Energy Certificate) program initiated similar to NJ and MA. Without this incentive the solar market in CT will continue to lag without any growth.

### Outreach/Education to Businesses

- Consistently and aggressively get the word out (publish, make public) case studies, numeric evidence of the financial savings businesses have enjoyed after adopting green strategies.
- I heard many certifications and initiatives mentioned in the breakouts. Can the state put together a list of these and acts as a central referring resource? Even posting on a state site info on certification, industry it applies to and URL would be helpful. (We don't know what to apply for if we don't know it exists).
- In an effort to help small businesses looking to go "green" (but don't know how), provide a very basic "one-stop shopping" instruction site. E.g., incentives (state and fed), process (steps), resources (who?), quantifying payback (\$ out vs. \$ in), reporting (mandatory/voluntary).
- On-line best practices sharing site.
- Annual sustainability conference.
- Environmental sustainability practices which many businesses are pursuing are heavily dependent on leaders and organizations who are leading, managing, and working in ways that are sustainable. We need to share the numerous best practices of how companies can build work cultures.

### Educating Students

- Cultivate a culture of "joy of learning" vs. consumption. This must begin in early childhood education – cultural literacy.
- Scholarships/internship stipends for students enrolled in sustainability education programs.
- Education: our tech schools at the high school level VERY IMPORTANT!! While visiting an Aunt in FL she said, "If I won the lotto I would start tech schools in FL like you have in CT" ... our kids do not connect with business. CT needs to continue our tech schools.
- Programs to help students find internships and career opportunities.
- Integrate environmental literacy statewide – all school systems – through a robust environmental current events program.

### Recognition Programs

- Develop comprehensive\* guidelines for various industries and building types (including municipalities) for improving sustainability and offer recognition similar to green campuses and green lodging; also measurement. \*Comprehensive = purchasing policies, energy use and renewable energy, water, recycling, transportation, hazardous waste reduction, outreach and education (handouts and signage).

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### Green Products

- Specifically CT manufacturers of green products so that these green business operators can become more aware of us local providers. Also invite more engineers and consultants for same reason.

### Transportation

- Focus on transportation EPA Smartway.
- What is the state's plan for the new infrastructure needed to support electric cars, docking stations, and the increase in power demand, where will the power come from?

### Electric Grid

- Convert grid to natural gas.
- Energy storage of lower cost off-peak energy now just going to waste for use the next day can raise the efficiency to 100% during the peak and lower \$. CA new law AB 2514 now mandates energy storage!
- Did you know a 10kw off-peak energy storage system will reduce CO2 equivalent to taking 2 cars off the road?

### Municipalities

- Investigate what could /should local governments do to support and advance sustainable businesses in their communities.
- What guidance is being offered to cities and towns on Bid/RFP (Request for Proposal) writing - inclusive of green elements?
- Create bonding possibilities for municipalities for a sustainable renewable energy climate, so that it is not a stop and go, 3 steps forward 2 steps backwards.

### State agency operations

- Lead by example, improve state building efficiency.
- State office buildings need to be redeveloped to become more energy efficiency, i.e., state office with inefficient window-based HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) units.
- State can and should take the lead on sustainable design and retrofitting.
- Encourage state to purchase local recycled products to create or enhance market for recyclables, i.e., recycled asphalt shingles for pavement, glass sand for beaches.
- Continue state lean initiatives such as what DEP is doing. Anything that decreases cost is valuable.
- Lean practices - business process waste reduction – continuous improvement involving ALL state employees in ALL state agencies for ALL business processes. State employee strategies: train, engage, support, learn from failures and celebrate successes, continuously improve (plan, do, check, act).

### DEP

- Reduce permitting process and timeline, i.e., recycling roof shingles, glass sand, etc.
- Convert DEP files to e-filing system. Other states do this. Saves trips to file room to physically look up and often copy these files. Start with all new files submitted or created. Work backwards on historical files. Makes file search process more timely and efficient. Saves on fuel and file searches. Saves on paper on both ends.

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- Navigating the maze of sometimes interrelated DEP regs can be daunting. It maybe helpful to business to have a concierge like service to assist. Something like this could lead to better compliance as well. As an example: emission permits, GPLPE (General Permit to Limit Potential to Emit from Major Stationary Sources of Air Pollution), and UST (underground storage tank) regulations overlap, but there doesn't seem to be expertise to ensure that the emitter is compliant with all applicable regulations.

### **Brownfields**

- Expedited brownfields process for small sites with 1-2 contaminants.
- Environmental performance indicators (metrics based).
- Reusing urban industrial sites: These sites are often financially upside-down. Existing environmental clean up requirements often mandate some clean up activities that don't really matter (don't serve to further protect human health or the environment). More flexibility is needed to use environmental management techniques to encounter re-use of these sites. DEP staff need to be educated and become more comfortable with management techniques as an alternative. Fear of precedent stifles innovation. Need to encourage bold re-use of urban sites – otherwise, the sites sit there and nothing changes.

### **Misc**

- Ecotransparency parallel to budget transparency.
- Government and business collaboration rather than regulation.
- CT got off to a good start with its CT Clean Energy Fund. What is being done to keep CT as a leader in sustainability? What ideas are we drawing from other states?

### **Comments on the Summit**

- Great event!!! I highly recommend having this summit annually, AND supporting smaller, regional business summits throughout the state.
- Fist, excellent event and fully support more like it.
- This format was very informative. We need more! Communications to business owners! Process owners (?) needs to be greater.
- General comment: the 9:45 Emerging Trends session was disappointing in that it did not cover emerging trends, innovation, or new business models. It was much of he same programs and ideas most other companies are implementing.
- Program today was really great!
- Great event. Let's do it again!
- Great educational session. Possibly incorporate CEU (Continuing Education Units) and LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) design initiatives in the next summit.
- Please do it again! I would suggest doing webinar in the event you miss a really good one or for people not able to attend.