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Connecticut Citizens Join Tens of Thousands Worldwide for Moving Planet Climate Event

NEW HAVEN, CT – Hundreds of citizens, educators, government officials, energy industry representatives, faith communities and farmers from all over Connecticut converged on the New Haven Green today to urge a swift and responsible move away from carbon-based fuels and towards a more sustainable way of life. Moving Connecticut, coordinated by 350 CT, is part of a 168-nation event called Moving Planet created by 350.org. 350 CT was joined by Mayor John DeStefano; State Representative Richard Roy, D-Milford, co-chair of the Environment Committee; State Representative Gail Lavielle, R-Wilton; Alex Kragie, special assistant to the commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection; Stewart Hudson, executive director of the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation; Roger Smith, New England clean energy director, Clean Water Action; and a class of fifth graders from Barnard Environmental Magnet School in New Haven. Statements of greetings and support from state leaders including Governor Dannel P. Malloy, U.S. Representative Rosa DeLauro and State Representative William Tong were read from the stage.

“It is truly inspiring to see so many people from all walks of life come together for Moving Connecticut—a day to celebrate all our work to move beyond fossil fuels toward a clean energy future, and part of a global day of action with over 2000 other events around the world,” said Justin Haaheim, lead organizer for 350 CT. “Pundits and politicians tell us that caring about our planet is a partisan issue, but our experience and the hard work of people across this state tells us otherwise. The truth is, here in Connecticut we’re showing the world that caring for the planet and caring about jobs go hand in hand, that a strong economy is a green economy, and that day-in and day-out the hardworking people of this state are building the better future we need by working together to move beyond fossil fuels. Today we’re rallying a critical mass of people, and even in the face of global climate change, this critical mass gives me immense hope in our future.”

“This effort underway here in Connecticut, around the country, and around the world, highlights the challenge of our time: we must find a better, cleaner, more efficient way of living and working to save our planet,” said Governor Dannel P. Malloy in a written statement. “In Connecticut, we will continue to make the investments needed to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, and in the process, reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. This is why I have given the green light to the state’s first bus rapid transit system; why I fought for an additional 30 million dollars in federal funding for high speed rail; and why I authorized the purchase of new commuter rail cars for our Metro-North system. Connecticut is committed to a cleaner, greener future.”

U.S. Representative Rosa DeLauro, CT-3, also sent a written statement. “Just four weeks ago, we felt the very real effects of climate change as Tropical Storm Irene wreaked havoc on communities across the entire eastern seaboard of the United States. And this storm is just the latest evidence of the impact of climate change. Scientists have made it is clear that human activity is contributing to the problem, and we must take immediate action and develop a comprehensive strategy to confront the reality of climate change,” said Congresswoman DeLauro. “We need to invest in clean and renewable energy, reduce harmful carbon dioxide emissions, and enact policies that set us on the path to energy independence. Transitioning to a clean energy economy and reducing our dependence on foreign oil will benefit all Americans, but most importantly, will help to protect our environment for future generations.”

The events in New Haven, which also included a mass bike ride around the city, a tree planting, and a bicycle-powered showing of the film *Wall-E* were part of a worldwide day of action calling for a fossil fuel-free world. Hundreds of thousands of people were expected to participate in 2,000 events across the globe, including five-mile hikes and 350-hour bike rides, symbolizing a move towards solutions to climate change. In Connecticut, additional events took place in Hartford, New London, Cheshire, East Haddam, Hamden, Middletown, Mystic, New Canaan, Trumbull, Wallingford, Watertown, West Hartford, Willimantic, Wilton and Woodbridge.

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350.org is an international grassroots climate campaign dedicated to science-based solutions to climate change. “350” stands for 350 parts per million, what scientists consider to be the safe upper limit of carbon in the atmosphere. We are currently at 392ppm.

Logo available for download at <http://www.350ct.org/resources>

More information about events in other towns is available at <http://350ct.org/move/events>