

2/19/08
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TESTIMONY OF
RICHARD A. SODERMAN
ON BEHALF OF
THE CONNECTICUT LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY and
YANKEE GAS SERVICES COMPANY

February 19, 2008

Good afternoon. My name is Richard Soderman and I am Director of Legislative Policy and Strategy for Northeast Utilities, here on behalf of The Connecticut Light and Power Company and Yankee Gas Services Company. We appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today about the complex energy challenges now facing Connecticut, and to provide comments on Raised Bill Nos. 5327 and 5330.

Regarding Raised Bill 5327 (AAC Utility Service Termination), a cost of providing electric service results from our inability to collect charges for electric and gas service for vacated rental properties or to terminate service to such properties. In such cases, our ability to terminate service is blocked because we are unable to gain access to our meters within the building. As a result, the cost of our receivables increases, which ultimately increases rates to all other customers.

This raised bill would provide for the owner or manager of such property to provide access to such meter, and, if access is not granted within a reasonable timeframe after a written request, the assignment to them for any charges and costs associated with service to that property. In this way, denial of access to our meters can no longer be used as a means to maintain service to a rental property without taking responsibility for the charges for that service. We support the provisions of this bill.

Regarding Raised Bill No. 5330 (AAC Municipal Utilities), we are concerned with subdivision (27) of section 2 that authorizes a municipal electric energy cooperative "to enter into agreements with any entity to provide for the supply or prepayment of a supply of natural gas, for the benefit of the municipal cooperative or any one or more of its members and participants or customers thereof." To the extent that this provision authorizes a municipal cooperative to interfere with the rights and responsibilities of gas distribution companies to serve its customers, we oppose such a provision. In this circumstance, it would likely result in the duplication of facilities and an inefficient process for serving all customers. This provision should be deleted from the raised bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before this committee.