

Paula Panzarella
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To: The Energy and Technology Committee
March 7, 2008

Thank you for this opportunity to consider the many proposed bills that offer solutions to the electric energy concerns of the people of CT. I particularly am here to support bills 5783, 5815 and 5819.

This past year, CT residents saw huge increases on many items, particularly energy. People whose monthly bill was \$70 saw it jump to \$105, \$115, or more. Our group, Fight The Hike, has talked with business people – grocers, restaurant owners, dry cleaners – small businesses cannot stay in business with 50% and higher increases. One New Haven coffeeshop owner paid \$149 for electricity in September 2006; in September 2007 the bill was \$503.

In the Feb. 15 issue of the Connecticut Post, Stratford business Ross & Roberts, established for 60 years, announced it was closing largely due to the state's high electricity prices. Sixty people will be losing their jobs.

Last April, the New Yorker magazine featured New Haven as a place where people can't afford to live.

Fight the Hike members have spoken with people throughout the state, have given out thousands of flyers and have had municipalities pass resolutions that call for greater transparency in energy generation and acquisition, and accountability of the electric companies and the Department of Public Utilities Control so that unethical and excessive costs are not foisted upon the rate payers.

The proposal for a Connecticut Energy Authority to act as an aggregate buyer for the state will be an improvement over the current method of procuring energy, as the CEA will be accountable to the public.

The proposals for helping develop clean sustainable energy in the state will ensure our state will providing reliable sustainable cost-effective electricity. The ever-rising cost of gas and oil, coupled with their harmful effect on our environment, point the way to developing safe solutions using solar, wind, hydro, tidal and geothermal energy.

And as many businesses in CT are developing the technology for solar, wind, hydro electricity generation, we would be enlarging the economic base as well as provide energy services to the state.

I am heartened that Bill 5783 proposes electricity market incentive rebates. Such a rebate is necessary for citizens who especially have been hardest-hit by the increased rates.

Across the state, residents and businesses cannot maintain their homes and livelihoods with the present situation. \$1.046 billion - the money spent on the transmission line from Middletown to Norwalk - could have been used to help solve the energy problems with investments in clean energy.

In New Haven, soup kitchens are serving many more people, especially families. The Columbus House overflow shelter opened a month early and filled up. Foreclosures in the New Haven/ Milford area are up 547% over last year. In the Bridgeport/ Stamford/ Norwalk area it's 552%. In Hartford it's 446%. 100,000 households are expected to need help paying their heating bills this winter.

At the mid-January "town hall meeting" of the Department of Economic and Community Development held at Southern CT State University, manufacturers and business owners cited the cost of electricity as one of the major impediments to business development in the state.

The Jan. 18 New Haven Register reported that Mayor William Dickinson Jr. of Wallingford has called for the state to re-regulate the electric power generation business, and "that both trash collection and providing power are so key to our daily lives that they must be regulated by government.

"Leaving it (trash collection) to the market (to determine prices) would be a mistake, just like it was with electricity,' Dickinson said."

For me, the intention of the Clean Energy Fund should be to help CT residents, schools, community centers and small businesses that don't have access to large investment funds to install or develop the new clean technologies. GE of Stamford last year received through the Clean Energy Fund \$700,000 to upgrade its headquarters with solar panels. This week in the New Haven Register it was reported that the annual salary of GE's Chief Executive was \$14 million. I feel the Clean Energy Funds were misused in going to such a wealthy corporation such as GE.

Fight the Hike continues to ask the Legislature to help the people of Connecticut in crafting a plan for rate relief, re-regulation, development of clean sustainable energy, and an accountability to the public for these services necessary for the public good.

The New Haven Independent Business Network sees the work coming out of the Energy and Technology Committee as critical for the survival of small businesses in the New Haven area. Both the Hamden City Council and New Haven Board of Aldermen have passed resolutions in support of our efforts before the Energy and Technology Committee to come up with long term and short term answers about the devastating effects the rate hikes have had on us. The most-affected people of our state, low-income and fixed-income, need immediate rate relief. There have to be moves to re-regulate the electric industry and reframe the buying process. We see a great need for more locally-generated electricity for Connecticut that is clean and sustainable, and we want the state to do its part in investing large-scale for solar, wind, hydro, tidal and geothermal power to serve the needs of residents.

Bills 5783, 5815 and 5819 speak to many of these issues of concern for CT residents. These bills go quite a way to developing a comprehensive energy program for the state and I urge you to accept them.

Thank you very much.



Paula Panzarella
a member of Fight the Hike

ATTACHED:

- (1) electricity resolutions from the New Haven Board of Aldermen and Hamden City Council
- (2) letters from Hamden residents who have asked me to include their previous letters regarding the high electricity costs

City of New Haven

Certified Copy

Resolution: LM-07-0327

165 Church Street
New Haven, CT 06510
(203) 946-6483 (phone)
(203) 946-7476 (fax)
cityofnewhaven.com

File Number: LM-07-0327

RESOLUTION OF THE NEW HAVEN BOARD OF ALDERMEN URGING THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT TO FOLLOW NEW HAVEN'S LEAD AND WORK TO REDUCE ELECTRIC RATES, INVEST LARGE-SCALE IN THE GENERATION OF CLEAN RENEWABLE ENERGY, BEGIN THE PROCESS OF RE-REGULATING THE ENERGY INDUSTRY, MOVE TOWARDS THE CREATION OF A STATE-WIDE PUBLICLY-OWNED ELECTRIC UTILITY, SUPPORT THE EFFORTS OF "FIGHT THE HIKE" AND COLLABORATE TO PRODUCE REASONABLE UTILITY RATES, PROMOTE CONSERVATION, AND PRODUCE A RATIONAL PLAN FOR LONG TERM CLEAN, SUSTAINABLE ENERGY STABILITY THROUGH A TRANSPARENT AND PUBLICLY ACCOUNTABLE PROCESS.

WHEREAS: the citizens of Connecticut recently endured an electric rate increase created by de-regulation; and

WHEREAS: those rate hikes included United Illuminating being granted an approximately 50% hike, and Connecticut Light & Power receiving approximately a 22% hike last summer followed by a proposed additional 7.7% in 2007 for increase of 29.7%; and

WHEREAS: as a result Connecticut now is among the highest electric rates in the continental United States; and

WHEREAS: the electric utility companies have instituted a flat rate distribution fee to all residential users to pay for the cost of maintaining power lines, building structural elements and to provide administrative oversight to individual dwellings and units; and

WHEREAS: it is a fact that it is significantly more expensive to maintain these costs in suburban and exurban environments and for those who consume outlandish amounts of energy and these rate structures therefore disproportionately hit cities and, in particular, residents in urban areas, smaller apartment buildings, and those who are engaged in innovative conservation programs; and

WHEREAS: a group of citizens banded together and organized to lobby the Connecticut State Legislature and regulatory agencies to produce a rational plan for long term clean, sustainable energy stability in Connecticut in order to support the public's need for reasonable utility rates, promote conservation, and allow for transparency and full public accountability; and

WHEREAS: without such a plan the social and economic effects of these huge increases will be devastating to those on fixed incomes, the poor, and businesses large and small; and

WHEREAS: this group of citizens named their effort "Fight the Hike"; and

WHEREAS: though several efforts were made to address this issue with state legislators

including rallies, meetings, and attendance at public hearings those activities did not result in any reasonable relief for rate payers.

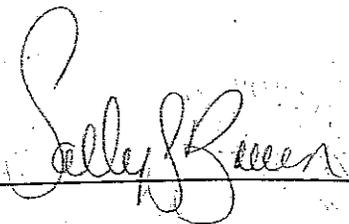
WHEREAS: the attainment of the goals would be beneficial to all residents and businesses in the City of New Haven;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE NEW HAVEN BOARD OF ALDERMEN that the New Haven Board of Aldermen (1) implores the State of Connecticut to follow New Haven's lead and work diligently in the State Legislature to reduce the cumbersome debilitating electrical rates inflicted upon all of Connecticut's citizens, invest large-scale in the generation of clean renewable energy (e.g., solar, wind, geothermal, tidal), begin the process of re-regulating the energy industry in Connecticut, and move towards the creation of a state-wide publicly-owned electric utility; and (2) that the New Haven Board of Aldermen supports the efforts of "Fight the Hike" and encourages all residents and businesses concerned about the increasing cost of electricity to collaborate with "Fight the Hike" to produce reasonable utility rates, promote conservation, and produce a rational plan for long term clean, sustainable energy stability in Connecticut through a transparent and publicly accountable process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Haven Board of Aldermen hereby encourages the electric utility companies of Connecticut to eliminate the flat rate distribution fee and to develop a fair rate structure for distribution charges.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE NEW HAVEN BOARD OF ALDERMEN that a copy of this resolution, duly adopted, be sent to the Clerk of the General Assembly for distribution to the entire State Legislature and the Governor of Connecticut, to the State Department of Public Utility Control, and to the Secretary of State for distribution to the municipal bodies (mayors, selectmen, town councils, boards of aldermen et. al.) of the other 168 cities and towns of Connecticut so that each municipality in our state can use this resolution as a model to create its own resolution for solving the energy crisis affecting the citizens of Connecticut.

I, , certify that this is a true copy of Resolution No. LM-07-0327, passed by the Board of Aldermen on 11/19/2007.



November 27, 2007

Date Certified

TOWN OF HAMDEN
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

RESOLUTION REGARDING ELECTRIC POWER

PRESENTED BY: Carol Noble

WHEREAS, the citizens of Connecticut recently endured an electric rate increase created in part, by de-regulation; and

WHEREAS, rate hikes included United Illuminating being granted an approximately 50% hike, and Connecticut Light & Power receiving approximately a 22% hike last summer followed by a proposed additional 7.7% in 2007; and

WHEREAS, Connecticut now endures one of the highest electric rates in the continental United States; and

WHEREAS, a group of citizens have organized to lobby the Connecticut State Legislature and regulatory agencies to produce a rational plan for long term clean, sustainable energy in Connecticut in order to support the public's need for reasonable utility rates, promote conservation, and allow for transparency and full public accountability; and

WHEREAS, without such a plan, the social and economic effects of these huge increases will be devastating to those on fixed incomes, the poor, and businesses large and small; and

WHEREAS, this group of citizens named their effort "Fight the Hike"; and

WHEREAS, though several efforts were made to address this issue with state legislators, those activities did not result in any reasonable relief for rate payers; and

WHEREAS, the attainment of the goals would be beneficial to all residents and businesses in the Town of Hamden; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Hamden Legislative Council:

- 1) Implores the State of Connecticut to follow Hamden's lead and work diligently in the State Legislature to reduce the cumbersome debilitating electrical rates inflicted upon all of Connecticut's citizens, invest large-scale in the generation of clean renewable energy (e.g. solar, wind, geothermal, tidal), and begin the process of re-regulating the energy industry in Connecticut; and
- 2) Supports the efforts of "Fight the Hike" and encourages all residents and businesses concerned about the increasing cost of electricity to collaborate with "Fight the Hike" to produce reasonable utility rates, promote conservation, and produce a rational plan for long term, clean, sustainable energy in Connecticut through a transparent and publicly accountable process.

Testimony of Roland C. Clement, 1199 Whitney Ave., Hamden

06517

tel. 203) 787-6687

To Hamden Legislative Council, concerning resolution to Connecticut Legislature requesting a review of the State's energy policy, at a hearing in Hamden, Jan. 7, 2008.

Mr. Chairman, and members of the Council:

I have been a resident of Hamden for over seven years. Before retirement I was headquarters scientist of the National Audubon Society (New York City) for nearly 19 years.

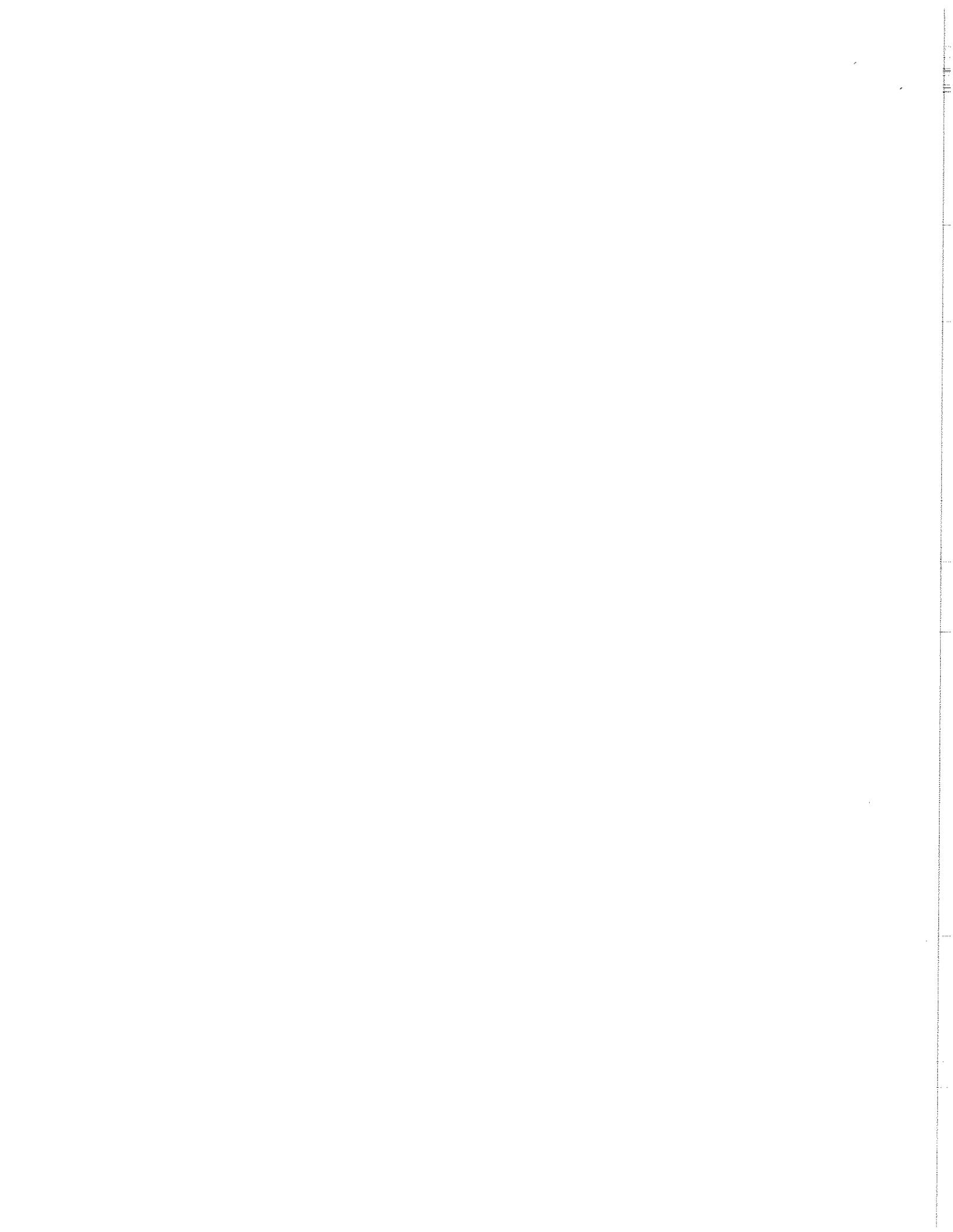
During that tenure, in the early Seventies, I was a member of the National Academy of Engineering's Committee on Power Plant Siting, at a time when the electric utilities were arguing the need of 1100 more power plants to meet "anticipated demand." None of those plants were built in the intervening 35 years. The so-called "demand" was met by other means, even though the U. S. remains one of the least efficient users of energy of all the developed nations.

About that time, also, as a resident of Norwalk, I served on Connecticut Governor Dempsey's somewhat similar committee on power plant needs.

It is this experience which leads me to endorse Fight the Hike's plea for a full review of our State's dated energy policies.

Your approval of this Resolution will help initiate a due process of reassessment at a crucial time, when global warming will probably force significant changes in our profligate use of resources. I was, by the way, an Air Force weatherman during World War II, and have continued to study the climate changes our pollution of the atmosphere has brought about.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity to share my concerns.



Jan. 7, 2008

Lulu deCarrone

Dear Members of the Hamden Legislative Council,

I've owned a small business in New Haven for the past seventeen years. During that time I've always paid my UI bill.

These last rate hikes have made it difficult because my UI bill has soared from around \$150.00-180.00 per month in peak months to 503.00 in September.

Businesses can't raise their prices every time there is a rate increase so we have to absorb them and this rate increase is so extreme it's hurting small businesses.

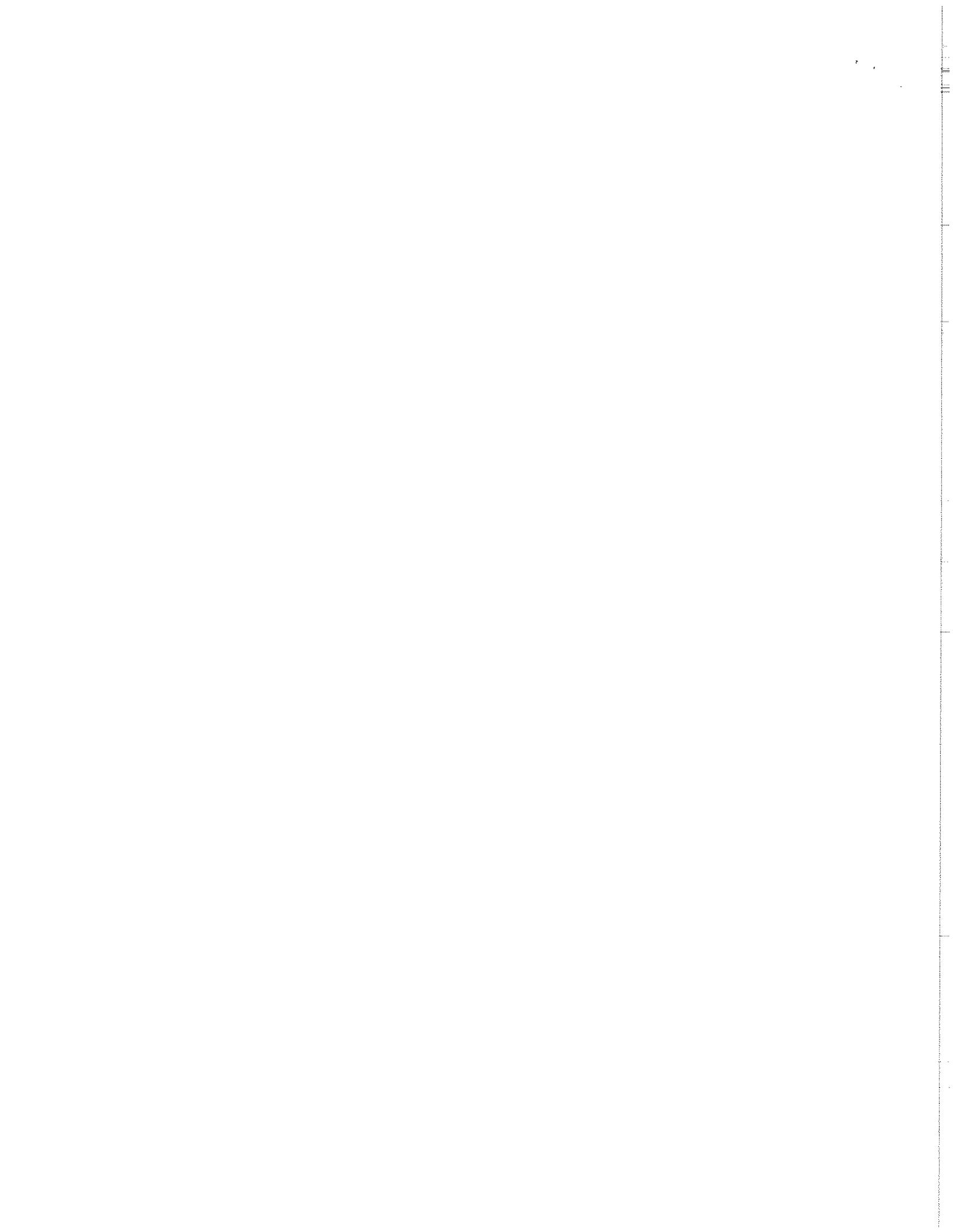
I want to pay my fair share but would also like to enjoy the fruits of my labor.

These hikes to our UI bill are becoming a hardship, I can't seem to catch up with my monthly bill anymore.

We need your help in re-regulating the electric industry.

Thank you for your help,
L.J. deCarrone
Hamden, CT.

owner of
Lu Lu's Coffee House
49 Cottage Street
New Haven, CT 06511



Mrs. Audrey Turner
Centerville Village
51 Worth Ave. Bldg. 2A
Hamden, CT 06518

February 14, 2008

Dear Frank and Paula,

I spoke with Gretchen Callahan, our town council representative from the 4th. district in Hamden last evening. She was kind enough to give me your address.

In the course of our conversation, Gretchen mentioned your group, "Fight the Hike". She explained your concerns, which by the way are mine also.

I am a resident of Centerville Village here in Hamden. There are forty apartment units in this complex comprised of the elderly and handicapped. The escalating cost of UT bills for all of us is frightening. The residents here are on fixed incomes. To pay these bills from the UT means that other necessities have to be cut back or eliminated entirely.

I am interested in hearing from you. I am willing to help in whatever capacity I can.

My phone number is, 288-6204.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Audrey Turner

cc: Mayor Craig Henriquez
Gretchen Callahan

