

**TESTIMONY OF
THE UNITED ILLUMINATING COMPANY**

Before the Energy and Technology Committee

Re:

Committee Bill 5694 – An Act Concerning Utility Service Termination

Legislative Office Building

February 17, 2009.

Senator Fonfara, Representative Nardello, and members of the Energy and Technology Committee. My name is George Balsamo and I am the Meter Security Manager for the United Illuminating Company. I am here today to express UI's strong support of raised **Committee Bill 5694– An Act Concerning Utility Service Termination**. This bill has been before the Committee several times and the Committee has acted favorably on it every time. The House of Representative has adopted the bill by overwhelming votes in every occasion.

The importance of utilities to access their equipment for purposes of inspection, testing, removal, exchange and the like has been recognized since metering was first developed. Utilities in the northeast have a significant portion of their revenue metering located indoors. It has become increasingly difficult for utilities to access their metering despite many attempts to notify inhabitants and owners of this need.

It is well known that the cost of energy has increased significantly and ratepayers have been dramatically affected as a result of these costs. Utilities are obligated to keep these increases at a minimum. The examination, testing and associated meter work is more important than ever and the need for utilities to access their equipment to perform these tasks has become equally important.

The advent of automatic metering allows utilities to measure energy more reliably than ever before. It is important to the ratepayer that this reliability be maintained. In multiple family dwellings access by utilities has become more difficult; partly due to the availability of inhabitants and partly due to apathy. Owners of these dwellings have historically assisted utilities in this access issue yet it is alarming to see an increasing number of owners reluctant to assist. This reluctance creates additional costs caused by the utility's inability to address revenue loss issues because it cannot access its equipment.

The bill seeks to assign the ongoing costs of not providing access to our facilities with the entities that have effective access control to our facilities - owners, agents, lessor's or managers of multiunit buildings.

The United Illuminating Company also supports the provisions of Section 1 of this bill that seeks to ensure that only the customer of record or the customer's authorized representative can request a voluntary termination of service.

For these reasons, the United Illuminating Company strongly supports **Committee Bill 5694– An Act Concerning Utility Service Termination** and urges The Energy and Technology Committee to give it a Joint Favorable Report.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I will try to answer any questions you may have.