



CONNECTICUT LEGAL SERVICES

A PRIVATE NONPROFIT CORPORATION

SHIRLEY BERGERT, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC BENEFITS TASK FORCE

872 MAIN STREET P.O. BOX 258 WILLIMANTIC, CT 06226-258

TELEPHONE (860) 456-1761 EXT. 115 OR 1-800-413-7796 (CLIENT TOLL-FREE LINE)

FAX (860) 456-7420

E-MAIL SBERGERT@CONNLEGALESERVICES.ORG

SHIRLEY BERGERT
DIRECTOR OF
PUBLIC BENEFITS TASK FORCE

ANNE LOUISE BLANCHARD
LITIGATION DIRECTOR

CATHERINE CUSHMAN
CHERYL DIANE FEUERMAN
BET GAILOR
JOELIN J. GATES
REBECCA LOOS
MYKLYN MAHONEY
SAMUEL T.D. NEVES, JR.
ROYAL STARK
WENDY W. WANCHAK
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

CAROLE MASTERS
VOLUNTEER ATTORNEY

THOMAS W. CRATTY, JR.
LAUREL J. FREEMAN
PARALEGALS

LUZ OSUBA
HEROILDA RIOS
LEGAL ASSISTANTS

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
62 WASHINGTON STREET
MIDDLETOWN, CT 06457
(860) 344-0447

AARON BAYER
BOARD CHAIR

STEVEN D. EPPLER-EPSTEIN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LAW OFFICES

211 STATE STREET
BRIDGEPORT, CT 06604

16 MAIN STREET
NEW BRITAIN, CT 06051

153 WILLIAMS STREET
NEW LONDON, CT 06320

20 SUMMER STREET
STAMFORD, CT 06901

85 CENTRAL AVENUE
WATERBURY, CT 06702

872 MAIN STREET
WILLIMANTIC, CT 06226

SATELLITE OFFICES

5 COLONY STREET
MERIDEN, CT 06451

62 WASHINGTON STREET
MIDDLETOWN, CT 06457

98 SOUTH MAIN STREET
SOUTH NORWALK, CT 06854

564 PROSPECT STREET
TORRINGTON, CT 06790

155 WEST MAIN STREET
ROCKVILLE, CT 06066

Comments Regarding Bill #6510

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PUBLIC POWER AUTHORITY Before the Energy and Technology Committee February 24, 2009

Prepared by Shirley Bergert¹

Recommended Action: Support

A public power authority, such as the one proposed in this bill, is the best possible approach to substantial long-term electricity rate reduction.

This bill proposes creation of a quasi-public state agency, the Connecticut Electric Authority (CEA), to oversee state efforts to reduce the cost of electricity. It would consolidate functions now handled piecemeal by several state bodies. The CEA would have the power to purchase generation, finance or construct new plant or arrange for its construction when needed in the public interest. It would integrate conservation into its approach. The CEA would act transparently and solely in the public interest.

Connecticut has reached a point where oversight of energy policy must be consolidated. The cost of electricity has skyrocketed under the current system, something that must be addressed to ensure that necessary energy is affordable and reliable.

The bill is long, but this is necessitated by inserting CEA into all systems addressing energy and conservation and shifting certain responsibilities to CEA. The bottom line is a consolidated approach to electricity planning where the public interest is the sole motivator.

The bill proposes using the systems benefit charge to fund the CEA, a worthy investment in a body which is likely to reduce electricity bills approximately 20% over time. And it will give Connecticut an accountable structure for long-term policy direction and implementation.

¹ Shirley Bergert serves: as the residential representative on the Energy Conservation Management Board overseeing the expenditure of ratepayer conservation funds in Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 16-245m); as the low income representative on the Fuel Oil Conservation Board (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 16a-22f); on the Low Income Energy Advisory Board (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 16a-41b); and on the Advisory Board of the Institute for Sustainable Energy at Eastern Connecticut State University.

