The Energy and Technology Committee

February 24, 2009

Raised Bill No. 6510, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PUBLIC POWER AUTHORITY

Testimony of

The Office of Consumer Counsel

Mary J. Healey, Consumer Counsel
Joseph Rosenthal, Principal Attorney

The Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC), the independent state advocate for consumer interests in all matters which may affect Connecticut consumers with respect to public service companies, has reviewed this proposal and stands ready to work with interested parties on a further study of this concept.

Among the potential benefits of the proposal to establish a Connecticut Electric Authority is that it would allow the State to remedy a shortfall in a certain type of power plant or resource need on a cost-of-service basis (see Section 12). The proposal would also centralize some authority in a single entity. Centralization could be beneficial if it promotes greater efficiency and public understanding, but it could also eliminate some of the healthy tension that now exists among the various energy agencies. The existing division of roles and responsibilities among Connecticut's energy agencies is working well in some situations, including the Connecticut Energy Advisory Board's role in the Integrated Resource Planning function.

OCC is open to the power authority concept and would be happy to participate with other interested parties as needed to consider enhancements.