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PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS
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Testimony in Support of H.B. 6632, An Act Concerning Energy Efficiency and the
Coordination of Energy Efficiency Programs

H.B. 6633 An Act Concerning Recommendations of the Connecticut Academy for
Science and Engineering Regarding Consolidation of Energy Programs and a Secretary
of Energy

H.B. 6635 An Act Concerning Solar Power
Before the Energy and Technology Committee February 5, 2009

The PRI Committee, which I co-chair with Sen. Kissel, has been very active on the issue of energy efficiency and coordination of energy efficiency programs, as the need is great, the coordination is terrible, consumers are begging us for help, and other states are poised to take advantage of federal money and we are not. Federal dollars are available to train unemployed people for new careers in green jobs and even to buy them a car, but we are not ready to claim this federal money. We can and we must do better.

Yesterday the PRI Committee voted out bills to set a baseline of energy consumption in CT, to set a state target at 10% per capita reduction off the 2006 baseline by 2015 and to simplify fuel assistance paperwork by doing it once every three years. There is no federal prohibition to this reduction in paperwork. It is reasonable to achieve a 20% reduction of energy use within 5 years with aggressive audits followed by weatherization. We encourage this committee to consider the PRI bills. The PRI Committee failed to approve a section setting aside \$15 million in gas company revenues for efficiency, mainly because committee members were afraid of a state raid of the new funds.

Earlier this session PRI staff issued a draft report recommending solutions similar to those contained in your HB 6632 to the energy efficiency coordination problems. The staff, after exhaustive study, concluded that our current programs are scattered and uncoordinated, we waste resources by offering home and business energy audits by fuel type instead of by a fuel blind approach, and our uncoordinated services don't help our

constituents fix the worst energy leaks first. In addition, existing energy efficiency funds target electricity, even though 2/3 of a household's energy costs are for heating.

A fuel blind energy audit would give us specific fixes in order of cost-effective priority, for example, installing 15 inches of insulation between ceiling and roof before considering a better furnace or window treatments. The original PRI study did not get the required seven votes after the electric utilities lobbied for its defeat. The utilities prefer to use the existing electric utility approach to audits and retrofit. But one half of the state heats with oil, and about 6% of the state's residents live in municipal utility territories. These oil and municipal utility customers do not have access to the same tools to reduce their consumption and save money. Even ^{between} among the two principle electric utilities, CL&P and UI, residential customers don't have equivalent access.

Everyone in CT—every business and every residence—needs equal access to efficiency programs. One central office in the state should be doing data analysis on our efforts to meet the state's energy savings goals and deploying efforts towards the most cost effective short term and long term solutions, including insulation, solar hot water and solar photovoltaic technology advanced by HB 6635.

Take a good look at the flow chart for energy efficiency services in our state prepared by the PRI staff. I have never seen such a ridiculously complicated system. In our neighbor state of NY, one entry point gets the constituent started on reducing their energy demand and taking advantage of any and all energy efficiency and funding programs. We need to use the most cost effective conservation approaches first, while holding programs accountable (and offering rewards) for achieving savings from baseline.

Ct Academy for Science and Engineering also recognized the failure of the state to designate a central agency for any and all questions about energy efficiency and conservation. Their recommendation in HB 6633 is another reasoned plea by nonpartisan researchers for coordination in energy leadership. The state has the most expensive energy costs in of any state in mainland U.S. (only Hawaii and D.C. are worse). We should be first to coordinate our energy services, because we have the most to lose.

Finally, our lack of coordination is unforgivable in light of the potential for green jobs to lead us out of the recession. This morning I participated in a briefing by Commission on Children and National Conference of State Legislators. I learned that there are considerable federal funds available to pay unemployed or underemployed parents to attend vocational school for green technology jobs such as audits, weatherization, insulation and clean energy and even to buy them a car to get them to the training program. One briefing participant said he can't even get a state official to return his calls to learn how to collect these funds.

People are hurting for work in our state. People are trying to save money on energy bills. Our constituents are looking for leadership, new technology jobs and answers and they need a central place to go. Please support these bills or some variation that offers coordinated help to all our citizens.