

**TESTIMONY OF CONNECTICUT NATURAL GAS CORPORATION AND THE SOUTHERN  
CONNECTICUT GAS COMPANY**

**Bill 602 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS AS REQUIRED  
IDENTIFICATION FOR OPENING AN ACCOUNT WITH A PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY**

Good Afternoon, Senator Fonfara and Representative Nardello and Members of the Committee, my name is James McNally Director of Customer Services for the Connecticut Natural Gas Corporation (CNG) and The Southern Connecticut Gas Company (SCG). Thank you for this opportunity to testify on raised bill 602 - An Act Concerning The Use Of Social Security Numbers As Required Identification For Opening An Account With A Public Service Company.

The Companies oppose this bill because as of this time neither the government nor private industry has been able to establish any alternate business consumer credit identity or monitoring system. The practice of obtaining social security numbers is important to verify the identify of potential customers. Over the years, we have gained knowledge of how individuals attempt to fraudulently open accounts or have service restored. Some of the examples are:

- o Provide false information on the phone
- o Pretend to be someone else to establish service
- o Pretend to be the owner of the property
- o Put the service in their children's names
- o Name switching

The greatest single tool we have to combat these fraudulent attempts is the unique Social Security number.

Identify theft is a significant problem for consumers and business, but the use of the Social Security in this case is an identity protection. If this tool is not available to utilities, we will see more fraudulent accounts set up which will eventually becomes bad debt that will be paid for by all customers. This would be a significant unanticipated consequence of this Bill.

I appreciate this opportunity to comment on the proposed legislation on behalf of CNG/SCG. We stand ready to work with this Committee to address the concerns which are raised and considered in the discussion of this Bill

Thank you.