



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
*DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITY CONTROL*

DONALD W. DOWNES  
CHAIRPERSON

**THE ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE**

**Senate Bill 1101: AAC COORDINATION OF LOW-INCOME ENERGY PROGRAMS**

**March 10, 2009**

**TESTIMONY OF CHAIRMAN DONALD W. DOWNES**

The Department of Public Utility Control (Department) would like to comment on Senate Bill No. 1101. Senate Bill No. 1101 would require that the Department open a contested case and promulgate regulations to develop a discounted rate for both gas and electric customers. This bill on its face is clearly a policy decision to be made by the General Assembly. The Department stands ready to implement the directives of such body politic in the best manner possible. Notwithstanding the above the Department has two comments.

First, the Department recommends that this bill if it is to become law the Committee should consider an amendment to the language substituting "contested case" for a "proceeding". This bill would not deprive anyone of their rights and privileges as is understood by the legal term of art triggered by the word "contested", rather the Department, by opening a proceeding would provide all parties with an opportunity to be heard and perform a thorough investigation into best policies and practices before rendering a decision on the matter.

Secondly, the Department does not need to remind all well-intentioned legislators that no power is derived for free and that protecting one class of customers translates into other customers bearing the burden of such special rates. Rather, in a proceeding on the matter, the Department would strive to meet the intent of this bill by developing a rubric whereby those who need a lifeline rate are not burdening a different class of ratepayers to meet their needs. The Department does not consider these separate interest are mutually exclusive and believes such process can be established thorough the current regulatory process.

The Department looks forward to working with this Committee to promote the policies outlined in this bill.