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## Energy and Technology Committee Hearing

March 16, 2010

Testimony of Shirley Bergert<sup>1</sup>

### Regarding RB 5508, AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE DIVISION OF ELECTRICITY POLICY AND PROCUREMENT

**Recommended Action: Support if a Connecticut Electric Authority is not adopted as proposed in HB 5505 AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTRIC RATE RELIEF, Sections 4-16 and 18-28.**

While we believe an electric authority would be the stronger vehicle for reducing electric rates in the long-term, this proposal is also a viable option. It provides for a modest reorganization of a part of the Public Utility Control Authority (PUCA) and two additional commissioners to oversee expanded responsibilities.

Currently the PUCA has responsibility to oversee a range of matters relating to electricity. These responsibilities would be assigned to the "Division of Electricity Policy and Procurement" to ensure their effective coordination at the PUCA and with other related bodies (e.g., OPM and CEAB). They will include oversight of electricity procurement and transmission and distribution upgrades, and promotion of conservation.

A key new function of this PUCA division is responsibility as Connecticut's lead agency for federal green jobs funding, establishing goals for green job development and overseeing implementation of these goals. Significant funding for green jobs has been part of the federal stimulus program and it is anticipated that significant new funds will become available, much of it competitively awarded. As was made clear in speaker Donovan's Green Jobs Panel report, Connecticut has no entity with current responsibility for oversight of green jobs, a growing area of the economy independent of the federal funding. If we hope to maximize the amount of federal funding Connecticut receives, we must have a government body with clear responsibility for seeking such funding.

<sup>1</sup> Shirley Bergert serves: on the Low Income Energy Advisory Board (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 16a-41b); 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); and on the Advisory Board of the Institute for Sustainable Energy at Eastern Connecticut State University.

