



# CONNECTICUT LEGAL SERVICES

A PRIVATE NONPROFIT CORPORATION

SHIRLEY BERGERT

872 MAIN STREET P.O. BOX 258 WILLIMANTIC, CT 06226-258

TELEPHONE (860) 456-1761 EXT. 115 OR 1-800-413-7796 (CLIENT TOLL-FREE LINE)

FAX (860) 456-7420

E-MAIL [SBERGERT@CONNLEGALESERVICES.ORG](mailto:SBERGERT@CONNLEGALESERVICES.ORG)

SHIRLEY BERGERT

DIRECTOR OF  
PUBLIC BENEFITS TASK FORCE

ANNE LOUISE BLANCHARD  
LITIGATION DIRECTOR

CATHERINE CUSHMAN  
CHERYL DIANE FEUERMAN  
BET GAILOR  
JOELEN J. GATES  
REBECCA LOOS  
SAMUEL T.D. NEVES, JR.  
ROYAL STARK  
WENDY W. WANCHAK  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

CAROLE MASTERS  
VOLUNTEER ATTORNEY

LAUREL J. FREEMAN  
PARALEGAL

THOMAS W. CRATTY, JR.  
VOLUNTEER PARALEGAL

LUZ OSUBA  
HEROILDA RIOS  
LEGAL ASSISTANTS

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE  
62 WASHINGTON STREET  
MIDDLETOWN, CT 06457  
(860) 344-0447

THOMAS D. GOLDBERG  
BOARD CHAIR

STEVEN D. EPPLER-EPSTEIN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## LAW OFFICES

211 STATE STREET  
BRIDGEPORT, CT 06604

16 MAIN STREET  
NEW BRITAIN, CT 06051

153 WILLIAMS STREET  
NEW LONDON, CT 06320

20 SUMMER STREET  
STAMFORD, CT 06901

85 CENTRAL AVENUE  
WATERBURY, CT 06702

872 MAIN STREET  
WILLIMANTIC, CT 06226

## SATELLITE OFFICES

5 COLONY STREET  
MERIDEN, CT 06451

62 WASHINGTON STREET  
MIDDLETOWN, CT 06457

98 SOUTH MAIN STREET  
SOUTH NORWALK, CT 06854

564 PROSPECT STREET  
TORRINGTON, CT 06790

29 NAEK ROAD, SUITE 5A  
ROCKVILLE, CT 06066

March 4, 2010 Energy and Technology Committee Hearing

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

RB 349: An Act Concerning Energy Efficiency Investments in Underserved Communities

### Recommended Action:

- Before adopting this bill and committing funds for conservation programs in underserved communities and job training, the legislature needs information on what programs are now provided in these communities and job training is available to determine if more funding is appropriate, as well as the impact on electric rates.
- If the bill is adopted, it should indicate specifically how much funding each identified source will cover in the programs.

This bill proposes that the DPUC require the Energy Conservation Management Board (ECMB), the Renewable Energy Investments Board, CL&P and UI establish a conservation program in underserved communities, including a job training component. This would be funded by the equivalent of 3% of the ratepayer conservation monies collected by CL&P and UI. Actual funding would come from ratepayer conservation and renewable energy funding and federal stimulus dollars. There are a number of issues with the bill as drafted:

- It does not provide guidance regarding how to determine the funding amounts from each of these sources.
- Federal stimulus funding is already committed pursuant to a plan submitted by the Governor to the federal government and it may not be easily modified.
- The ECMB oversees conservation programs now serving UI and CL&P's service territories, including programs in underserved communities. While there is no job training component specifically for these communities, training is funded for contractors delivering program conservation services. Before committing funds for conservation programs and job training, the legislature needs information on what programs are now provided in these communities to determine if more funding is appropriately targeted there.
- Any job training program should be developed in concert with legislation to be considered as a result of the Speaker Donovan's Green Jobs Panel (report released on March 1, 2010).
- Connecticut has the highest electric rates in the continental US. The impact of this proposal on rates should be a consideration, particularly since electric bills are unaffordable to many low income households.

<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 ECSU.

