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TESTIMONY OF RICHARD A. SODERMAN  
THE CONNECTICUT LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY  
and YANKEE GAS SERVICES COMPANY

Energy and Technology Committee  
February 10, 2011

***P.H.B. No. 5846 - AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY GENERATION FROM ORGANIC REFUSE***

Good afternoon. My name is Richard Soderman, and I am Director of Legislative Policy and Strategy for Northeast Utilities Service Company, appearing on behalf of the Connecticut Light and Power Company and Yankee Gas Services Company.

I would like to start with some good news. CL&P's residential electric rates went down by about 7.8% as of January 1, 2011, providing relief to our customers, and especially those with limited incomes. Second, our current residential rates are more than 13% less than what they were in January 2009. Third, based on our expectations on costs in the future, we anticipate further reductions in our rates in 2012, in all, totaling about 15% from their peak. Thus, electric bills have become less of a burden on all customers, including those on limited incomes. I implore the legislature to avoid taking actions that, in effect, spend those savings through new programs or diversions, and instead let those reductions flow on to residential and business consumers.

Turning to H.B. 5846, this bill proposes that the general statutes be amended to establish a pilot program to offer credit incentives for deriving methane gas from organic refuse.

We support the concept of pilot programs to test the viability of new technologies. Pilot programs allow policy makers the opportunity to determine the costs and benefits of new programs before long term and substantial financial commitments by electric consumers must be made. Because the proposed language is vague and without any pilot design criteria, it may be appropriate to examine the issue further, and if determined such a program makes sense, to implement a pilot at that time.



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We believe that a responsible renewable policy needs to balance several factors, including jobs, economic activity and impacts on consumers. We find it confusing that, to date, Connecticut has focused on the more expensive means of clean energy. At the same time, the debate continues regarding CT's high energy costs, and the state has cut its most cost effective clean energy resource, energy efficiency.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed legislation.