

TESTIMONY OF

UIL HOLDINGS CORPORATION

Before the Energy and Technology Committee

On

Proposed Bill 6023, AN ACT CONCERNING UTILITY COLLECTION AGENCIES

Legislative Office Building

February 17, 2011

Good afternoon Senator Fonfara, Representative Nardello, and members of the Energy and Technology Committee. My name is Laura Gonzalez and I am the Director of Collections at The United Illuminating Company (“UI”). I am here today to offer the comments of UIL Holdings Corporation, on behalf of UI, The Southern Connecticut Gas Company and Connecticut Natural Gas Corporation, regarding Proposed Bill **6023, AN ACT CONCERNING UTILITY COLLECTION AGENCIES.**

The Proposed Bill provides that “the general statutes be amended to require utility companies to coordinate with their collection agencies to report when a customer has paid.” If there is a problem with utilities not promptly informing collection agencies when customers pay, it would appear that this problem could promptly and reasonably be addressed by the Department of Public Utility Control rather than require legislation.

The utility, the collection agency and the customer's interests are all served if the collection agency is informed when a customer whose account has been referred to the agency makes payment. If a customer pays the utility, it will take some time for the utility to process the payment and then to notify the collection agency. As a result, it is possible that a customer makes payment, but the collection agency coincidentally is calling the customer while the payment is being processed or the utility is notifying the agency that payment has been received. In those circumstances, the customer should inform the collection agency that payment has been made. In these instances the collection agency would then verify payment with the utility and stop future calls.

If we have misunderstood the intent of the Proposed Bill, we would be happy to work with the committee to address the specific issues, and work to achieve a mutually acceptable solution.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am happy to address any questions you may have.