



**Connecticut
Light & Power**

The Northeast Utilities System



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**TESTIMONY OF RICHARD A. SODERMAN
THE CONNECTICUT LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY
and YANKEE GAS SERVICES COMPANY
Energy and Technology Committee—Feb. 3, 2011**

**P.H.B. No. 5208 - AN ACT CONCERNING LIENS PLACED ON REAL PROPERTY BY
ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES**

Good afternoon. My name is Richard Soderman, and I am Director of Legislative Policy for Northeast Utilities, appearing on behalf of the Connecticut Light and Power Company and Yankee Gas Services. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the bill before you.

This bill would provide an electric company with the ability to place a lien on the land records when an electric bill is unpaid for 6 months or longer. CL&P supports this provision. The bill should be clarified to confirm that:

- (a) this lien can be enforced or redeemed in the same manner as mortgage and judgment liens on real property;
- (b) the duration of this lien should be the same as the lien of an unpaid mortgage (40 years) from the date the mortgage was recorded, or at a minimum, at least 20 years which is the same duration of a judgment lien on real property; and
- (c) placing a lien on the property is not the exclusive remedy available to collect an unpaid utility bill.

Utilities should also have the right to obtain a court judgment and enforce it against the landowner's personal property.

In addition, this bill bars an electric distribution company from collecting any unpaid bill – no matter how large the unpaid amount – if no lien is recorded before the property is sold to a new owner. We oppose this provision. The consequence of this legislation is that all of our other customers will end up paying for such uncollectible bad debts.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this bill.