

IP

TESTIMONY OF

UIL HOLDINGS CORPORATION

Before the Committee on Labor and Public Employees

On

**COMMITTEE BILL 359, AN ACT CONCERNING EMPLOYER NOTICE TO
EMPLOYEES REGARDING MANDATORY OVERTIME.**

Legislative Office Building

February 15, 2010

Good afternoon Senator Prague, Representative Zalaski, and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. My name is Alfred Felice, Jr. and I am Restoration Manager at The United Illuminating Company ("UI"). I am here today to offer comments regarding **COMMITTEE BILL 359, AN ACT CONCERNING EMPLOYER NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES REGARDING MANDATORY OVERTIME.**

UIL Holdings Corporation ("UIL") opposes Committee Bill 359. UIL is the parent company of The United Illuminating Company (UI) as well as The Southern Connecticut Gas Company ("Southern") and Connecticut Natural Gas Corporation ("CNG"). The Bill proposes that companies be required to provide advance notice of certain mandatory overtime to employees, and would also require an employer to provide twenty-four-hours notice if employees are going to be required to work more than eight hours of overtime in a single pay period. If this Bill were passed, the restrictions could impact the ability of UI, Southern and CNG to accomplish work needed to maintain or restore customer service, and to address emergency safety or reliability issues.

Today, UI, Southern and CNG currently assign and notify workers of impending overtime for scheduled maintenance and construction activities as far in advance as practical. However, public service companies such as electric and gas utilities must, and do, respond immediately to emergency situations, disruption of utility service and other

public hazards. These situations, including storms, traffic accidents and gas leaks, must be addressed promptly, even if they occur in the middle of the night, weekends or on holidays. During major storms and widespread disruption of utility service, all overtime is mandatory until the job is done. In some emergency situations we request volunteers to perform the needed repairs to our infrastructure. However, if there are not enough people do to the work, then overtime becomes mandatory. Requiring 24 hours notice or limiting overtime to 8 hours per pay period for utility companies will mean that necessary restoration work is delayed. Therefore, UIL suggests that the Bill be amended to provide an exemption for electric and gas distribution companies, due to the complexity and critical nature of the services provided by these companies to the State's residents and businesses and the lack of operational flexibility when emergency situations arise.

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