



Testimony of Connecticut Fund for the Environment

Before the Energy & Technology Committee

Concerning:

HB 5474, AN ACT CONCERNING THE AUTONOMY OF THE PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY.

Submitted by
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Connecticut Fund for the Environment ("CFE") is a non-profit environmental organization with over 5,400 members statewide. The mission of CFE is to protect and improve the land, air and water of Connecticut and Long Island Sound. For more than twenty-five years, CFE has used legal and scientific expertise to bring people together to achieve results that benefit our environment for current and future generations.

Senator Fonfara, Representative Nardello and members of the Committee, Connecticut Fund for the Environment is pleased to have the opportunity to offer the following testimony on HB 5474.

HB 5474 proposes several changes to the existing statutory relationship between the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA). While some specificity and clarity regarding those discrete matters over which PURA itself has primary responsibility for decision-making may be warranted, I caution against over-reach in this regard and against a whole-sale organizational separation of DEEP and PURA.

For example, while it may make sense to identify PURA as the *specific branch* of DEEP with responsibility for developing standard billing formats for electric suppliers (section 10 of HB 5474), it is important that DEEP remain in a position to be able to provide guidance and direction to PURA regarding the state's energy policy and the implementation of that policy. After several years during which (then) DPUC effectively styled itself as a policy-making branch of state government and chose to disregard specific legislative mandates regarding the design and implementation of the state's energy policy (specifically with respect to the development of all-cost effective energy efficiency resources to reduce energy demand), Connecticut is finally making progress on implementing some long-standing energy efficiency policies.

The organizational structure of DEEP, and the relationship between DEEP and PURA, that was established by Public Act 11-80 is still relatively new but it appears to be producing positive outcomes that will benefit Connecticut's residents. I urge the Committee to allow this new structure the time to prove itself.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.