



Stewards of the Environment

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Energy and Technology Committee
Room 3900, Legislative Office Building Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Raised Bill No. 5474 An Act Concerning the Autonomy of the Public
Utilities Regulatory Authority

Dear Members of the Committee on Energy and Technology:

I am writing in support of Raised Bill No. 5474, An Act Concerning the Autonomy of the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority. The Act would restore the traditional powers and authority of PURA, Connecticut's primary utility regulatory body, while also respecting the role of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). We appreciate the significance and importance of a policy focused organization like DEEP. We also recognize the importance of an autonomous utility regulatory body like PURA in carrying out the critical utility infrastructure oversight role delegated to it by the Legislature.

Last year, Public Act 11-80 wisely recognized that Connecticut needs a cohesive and coordinated energy policy. It therefore created DEEP to consolidate, coordinate and oversee policy among the then disparate agencies. DEEP has been effective in its role. Under the leadership of Commissioner Esty, DEEP has cut red tape, streamlined many governmental processes, and created cutting edge programs.

However, Connecticut needs to retain the check and balance provided by an autonomous utility regulatory body. PURA is lead and staffed by dedicated, knowledgeable professionals who have been overseeing the infrastructure investment, operations and rates of Connecticut's utilities for years. PURA understands the industry and the precedents that have guided our state's utilities over the years. Of course, we recognize the need for evolving policy to move Connecticut forward. This has wisely been entrusted to DEEP. However, we need to retain the independence of PURA to consider and weigh policy initiatives alongside precedent and technical realities to ensure that regulatory decisions are measured and respect the statutory pronouncements and precedents under which investments and decisions have been made.

The changes urged by Raised Bill No. 5474 are relatively administrative. They do not undercut the blueprint for a cohesive regulatory policy, which will remain with DEEP. The Bill simply restores PURA as an autonomous regulatory body guided by policy and faithful to the safety, operational and economic standards created over the years by the legislature.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles V. Firlotte". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Charles V. Firlotte
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