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Testimony of Shirley Bergert¹
Before the Energy and Technology Committee
Regarding H.B. No. 5544
An Act Concerning Storm Preparation and Emergency Response
March 20, 2012

**Recommended action: Support sections 1 and 2,
ensuring storm preparation includes planning for at-risk and
vulnerable customers**

Sections 1 and 2 of this bill develop a process to ensure future adequate storm planning by electric and telephone companies with Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) oversight. **There is specific provision to ensure appropriate standards and planning for at-risk and vulnerable customers. Some customers are at far greater risk in extended outages and planning to minimize the risk of harm is critical. We strongly support this effort.**

Particularly vulnerable individuals may be in nursing facilities or hospitals, but many also reside in the community and include, among others: frail elderly; persons with disabilities or who are chronically ill, some of whom rely on electrically powered medical equipment; infants; and persons whose health requires special food preparation or maintenance of high sanitary standards.

The process prescribed in the bill:

- Section 1 requires the PURA to open a docket to establish performance standards by electric and telephone companies in emergencies. PURA must then report to the legislature's Energy and Technology Committee regarding the standards PURA establishes and making recommendations concerning legislative changes necessary to implement them.
- Section 2 requires electric and telephone companies to annually submit an emergency response and infrastructure report to PURA and the Energy and Technology Committee detailing its practices concerning service restoration after an emergency and emergency preparation during the previous year.

¹ CT Legal Services represents low income state residents in civil legal matters. Shirley Bergert serves on the Low Income Energy Advisory Board, Energy Conservation Management Board, Fuel Oil Conservation Board, and the Advisory Board for the Institute for Sustainable Energy.