



Connecticut Department of
**ENERGY &
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Public Hearing – March 20, 2012
Energy & Technology Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Daniel Esty
Presented By Jessie Stratton

Governor’s Bill No. 23 AN ACT ENHANCING EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

House Bill No. 5544 AN ACT CONCERNING STORM PREPARATION AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Governor’s Bill No. 23 – An Act Enhancing Emergency Preparedness and Response and House Bill No. 5544 - An Act Concerning Storm Preparation and Emergency Response. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) welcomes the opportunity to offer the following testimony.

The Department strongly supports Governor’s Bill No. 23, which, among other initiatives: 1) enhances the scope and oversight of the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security’s civil preparedness plan and programs to specifically include public service companies; 2) directs PURA to establish minimum performance standards for public utilities in emergency preparation and restoration of service in emergencies; and 3) develops a grant and loan program for deployment of renewable distributed generation and microgrids to serve critical facilities. These major components of Governor’s Bill No. 23 form a strong framework for better protecting Connecticut residents and businesses from a myriad of potential emergencies, and lay the groundwork for harnessing new technologies to improve the flexibility and resiliency of the state’s electric system.

House Bill No. 5544 includes many provisions that parallel those found in Governor’s Bill No. 23. The Department would be pleased to work with the Committee to integrate the substance of these two bills. In particular, the provisions of section 12 of House Bill No. 5544 align well with the efforts that the Department has already begun on microgrids and distributed generation, in consultation with the Governor’s office, members of the General Assembly, municipalities, the state’s utilities, and manufacturers of distributed resources. As the Committee knows, deployment of a distributed generation microgrid network to support critical functions around the state has sparked a very high level of interest. That interest leads us to believe that Connecticut has an exciting opportunity to be on the cutting edge of developing an approach to improving the resiliency of the state’s critical infrastructure in a way that not only improves public safety, but benefits the economy and the environment.

However, despite that interest and the Department's aggressive pursuit of policies to foster a distributed generation microgrid deployment strategy, we believe that prioritizing projects that are ready to proceed prior to October 1st of this year may not only be optimistic but also counterproductive to focusing the state's attention on the best projects.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on Governor's Bill No. 23 and House Bill No. 5544. If you should require any additional information as you consider these bills, please contact DEEP's legislative liaison, Robert LaFrance at 424-3401 or Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov