

TOWN OF SOMERS

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Energy and Technology Committee
March 20, 2012 Written Testimony
Lisa Pellegrini, First Selectman, Somers

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Good Day,

My name is Lisa Pellegrini and I am the First Selectman of Somers and am a member of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM). CCM is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 90% of Connecticut's population.

Although I am unable to be present at this meeting I greatly appreciate the opportunity to be heard today regarding:

Senate Bill 23 "An Act Enhancing Emergency Preparedness and Response"
House Bill 5544 "An Act Concerning Storm Preparation and Emergency Response"
Senate Bill 450 "An Act Concerning Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy"

and thank the Energy and Technology Committee for their time and attention.

CCM supports SB 23, HB 5544, and SB 450 as reasonable measures to address the deficiencies in emergency response and recovery that were experienced as a result of Tropical Storm Irene and last October's Storm Alfred.

- ✦ **SB 23:** would, among other things (1) authorize the State's regulatory authority to "establish minimum standards of performance for utilities" and (2) establish a \$5 million micro-grid pilot program for interested towns and cities to apply.
- ✦ **HB 5544:** would also seek to establish certain performance standards and create a micro-grid pilot program - it would also, among other things, codify procedures and standards for (1) tree trimming policies conducted by private utility companies, and (2) private utilities' staffing levels and their coordination and communication with municipalities. HB 5544 would also require (1) appropriate employees of the State's regulatory authority to be training under the federal "NIMS" system, (2) telecommunications companies to maintain back-up generators for critical cell towers or antennas, and (3) that all private utility companies submit annual "emergency response and infrastructure reports."
- ✦ **SB 450:** would, among other things, require each electric distribution company to submit a ten year plan to PURA to strengthen their utility infrastructures performance and resiliency, and stipulates that such a plan include strategies for evaluating and preparing storm

response resources, planning and drilling exercises with each municipality and the state and any other activity necessary to prepare for any natural disaster.

It is no secret that all emergencies, either man-made or natural disasters, start locally and end locally. Recent experience has proven that there are opportunities for improvements and now is the time to implement these improvements. To this end, Connecticut's local officials have set the standard for emergency preparedness, response and recovery from all hazards. **CCM welcomes the proposals set forth in SB 23, HB 5544 and SB 450 as astute enhancements to our hometowns' emergency plans, and prudent means of ensuring the safety of our communities.**