



Connecticut Department of
**ENERGY &
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

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

Public Hearing – March 9, 2012
Planning & Development Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Daniel Esty

Raised House Bill No. 5407 – An Act Concerning Performance Standards for Public Utilities

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding Raised House Bill No. 5407 “An Act Concerning Performance Standards for Public Utilities”. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) welcomes the opportunity to offer the following testimony. This proposed legislation charges the Commissioner of DEEP with establishing performance standards that would improve communications and enhance emergency preparedness of the utilities going-forward and to submit his findings in a report to the General Assembly.

As the Committee is well aware, in the aftermath of the two historic storms there have been numerous reviews including the Governor’s Two Storm Panel, the Witt report, legislative forums regarding the storms and most recently, the Davies’ report and each determined a need for establishing benchmarking and specific performance standards for the utilities in terms of preparedness and storm response.

DEEP further notes that Governor Malloy has proposed legislation to this effect in Senate Bill 23- “An Act Enhancing Emergency Preparedness and Response”. The Governor’s bill directs the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA or Authority) to establish such performance standards, empowers the Authority to seek penalties from utilities that do not meet those standards, and requires rebates to customers if a utility fails to meet certain performance standards during post storm-related outages.

DEEP believes that the issues concerning performance standards are better assigned to PURA, as proposed under the Governor’s bill referenced above, and notes that it also encompasses a more comprehensive approach the issues that emerged post the two storms in 2011. DEEP thanks the Committee for raising this issue and would be pleased to work with the committee to ensure their concerns are addressed in what we believe is the more appropriate approach detailed in Senate Bill 23..

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact DEEP’s legislative liaison, Robert LaFrance at 424-3401 or Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov