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To the Co-Chairs and members of the Energy & Technology Committee

Testimony in opposition to RAISED BILL NO. 6402, AN ACT MODERNIZING THE STATE'S TELECOMMUNICATIONS LAWS

Submitted by Lindsay Farrell, Executive Director

Working Families opposes legislation that is unfriendly to consumers and crafted without the input of consumer advocates. HB 6402 has no such input, and would lessen oversight of the reliability of AT&T's (and Verizon's for a portion of Fairfield County) network, risking reliable service for local businesses and families.

We are concerned that the legislation will lead to a poorly maintain, unaffordable, neglected network because it removes accountability measures and regulations. Especially in this day and age of frequent severe weather, we need a system that is securely available to all customers all over the state. We object to the following pieces of the bill:

- Section 1, eliminating the annual audit of AT&T and Verizon – currently our only mechanism to see how much money telecommunications companies send out of CT to shareholders.
- Section 4b, removing even more regulatory protection for consumers by expanding the definition of competitive services.
- Section 4c, eliminating PURA's ability to protect consumers and reclassify services as noncompetitive.
- Section 5, allowing telecommunications companies to withdraw services upon 30 days' notice, without even any regulatory review.
- Section 6, watering down PURA's regulatory oversight of the telecommunications industry, compromising reliability and service quality, and putting our members' safety at risk.

These policies leave consumers, businesses and workers exposed.

We urge no action on this legislation.