



Testimony of Abraham Scarr, Director

Connecticut Public Interest Research Group (ConnPIRG)

in opposition to

**Raised Bill 6401: An Act Concerning Video and Cable Providers**

and

**Raised Bill 6402: An Act Modernizing the State's Telecommunications Laws**

Chairperson Reed, Chairperson Duff and Members of the Committee: My name is Abe Scarr and I am the Director of the Connecticut Public Interest Research Group (ConnPIRG). Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in opposition to Raised Bill 6401: An Act Concerning Video and Cable Providers and Raised Bill 6402: An Act Modernizing the State's Telecommunications Laws.

**Raised Bill 6401: An Act Concerning Video and Cable Providers - *Opposed***

This bill prohibits Connecticut from regulating "the entry, rates, terms or conditions of interconnected VoIP service." A growing number of consumers rely on Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) for phone services. As there remains a lack of competition in internet services in Connecticut, consumers using VoIP deserve the regulatory protection of the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA). Connecticut should not relinquish its regulatory authority of VoIP.

**Raised Bill 6402: An Act Modernizing the State's Telecommunications Laws - *Opposed***

This bill eliminates PURA's annual audit of telecommunications providers, expands the definition of "competitive services" in telecommunications, remove's PURA's ability to reclassify services as noncompetitive, and allows telecommunications providers to unilaterally withdraw competitive services. The state's definition of competitive services is already broad, including customers who purchase just one additional service beyond basic local service, such as Call Waiting or Caller ID. This bill would leave an increasing number of consumers without basic consumer protections. The storms of the last two years have highlighted the importance of a reliable network and regulatory oversight to ensure reliability. All consumers of basic local service deserve consumer protections and regulatory oversight, whether or not they purchase additional services.

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