

Testimony on House Bill 5408

Regarding a bill to address tree trimming in Connecticut:

The environmental, economic and aesthetic benefits that old, large canopy producing trees must not be overlooked. These types of trees in particular do a better job than small ornamental or newly planted trees at sequestering carbon, mitigating storm water runoff, lowering air and asphalt temperatures, and providing habitat and food for birds and animals. I encourage that the following be adopted in a bill addressing tree trimming:

- Require that utility companies provide adequate consultation with homeowners and the community at large before conducting any tree removal program.
- Allocate funds and resources to towns and tree wardens that will help facilitate inventory and identification of trees.
- Provide funding and resources to replant all trees removed.
- Require utilities to grind stumps of removed trees in the public right of way.
- Hold utility tree service subcontractors accountable through the requirement of a service bond.

The intersection of trees and electric distribution wires is a complex issue that requires nuance and sensitivity to the many different types of neighborhoods found throughout Connecticut. My hope is that a bill addressing tree trimming will take into account the many benefits that our neighborhood and roadway trees provide and allocate the resources needed to manage and protect them.

Thank you,
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