

TESTIMONY OF
STEPHEN GIBELLI, ASSISTANT GENERAL COUNSEL

Energy and Technology Committee
February 24, 2015

**RE: Proposed H.B. No. 5467, AN ACT CONCERNING EMERGENCY REPAIR OF
UTILITY POLES**

An emergency situation in which a pole is down can be very dangerous, and possibly life-threatening, to the employees of the company, first responders, our customers and anyone else involved in the incident. As such it is important that the situation get addressed expeditiously, but safely.

While we agree with the need for expeditious pole replacement, this bill is not necessary. In its review of the utilities' response to the 2011 and 2012 major storms, the Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority ("Authority") did not conclude that there were any pole-repair issues. In fact, we already have an effective mechanism in place whereby the utility which repairs or replaces the pole bills the joint owners for such work. In addition, the Authority recently named the electric distribution companies as the single pole administrators for all poles within their service territories which will allow for a more streamlined process for addressing any future pole-related issues.

Eversource remains committed to working with public officials on our responses to emergencies and discussing any particular opportunities for improvement.