

TESTIMONY OF
STEPHEN GIBELLI, ASSISTANT GENERAL COUNSEL

Energy and Technology Committee
February 24, 2015

RE: Proposed H.B. No. 6013, AN ACT REQUIRING ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES TO CREDIT CUSTOMERS FOR PROLONGED SERVICE OUTAGES

This proposed bill pre-determines a penalty for electric service outages without any due process to the utility which may have performed well in its response to an emergency. Given the new review process established in Public Act 12-148, this proposed bill is duplicative.

In 2012, following multiple public hearings addressing the storm response of the Connecticut utilities, Public Act 12-148 was passed. This law requires the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (“Authority”) to review the performance of the utilities if more than ten percent of a utility’s customers are out of service for more than 48 hours or at the discretion of the Authority. If, after a contested hearing, the Authority determines that a utility did not respond to the emergency in accordance with Authority-approved standards, they can penalize a utility an amount up to 2.5 percent of the utility’s annual distribution revenue. But it is through this review process that the Authority can determine whether or not the outage was caused by or exacerbated by the utility or whether or not the length of the outage was due to circumstances beyond the utility’s control.

Lastly, customers without service do not pay any usage charges. Because they are not taking electricity through the system, their meter is not running and, thus, charges are not accruing.

For the aforementioned reasons, Eversource Energy does not believe this legislation is necessary or warranted.