EVERSOURCE ENERGY

TESTIMONY OF
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Energy and Technology Committee
February 24, 2015

RE: Proposed H.B. No. 6018, AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY SERVICE RESTORATION

This proposed bill would require that public service companies prioritize service restoration for customers with disabilities.

During an outage event, the electric distribution companies restore service starting at the substation and work to repair damaged lines which deliver electricity to the largest number of customers. After distribution lines are repaired, it is likely that most customers fed off that particular circuit will be restored. However, there may be instances where an individual still does not have service because the service drop from the distribution line to the customer's home is damaged. The company would then repair the service lines.

Eversource does have restoration priority guidelines which have been reviewed and approved by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority ("Authority") and place higher priorities on life threatening situations, clearing of blocked roads, critical facilities (such as town fire and police stations), and transmission lines and substations. The goal in service restoration is to restore the most customers in the fastest time possible.

Eversource does have a proactive outbound calling campaign to reach customers who are coded in our system as having a serious illness or life threatening condition. Eversource would begin

such a campaign in anticipation of a weather event that could result in widespread power outages. We provide these customers with information on emergency shelters and how to contact the Red Cross. During an event with multi-day outages, Eversource outreaches to all medically coded customers still without power to see if they would like the Red Cross to contact them for any particular needs. During the multiple reviews of CL&P's response to the 2011 and 2012 storms, this was considered a best practice that Eversource is now implementing in both Massachusetts and New Hampshire. The confidential list that we send to the Red Cross is divided by customers who need a visit by the Red Cross because of their condition or other reason, or those who would like a call from the Red Cross to speak with them further. All medically-coded customers in our system are automatically included in our calling campaign. However, other customers can also register to be informed if a family member has a medical condition.

In addition, in accordance with state law, Eversource provides municipalities with a list of medically-coded customers so that they can check on the well-being of such residents during a prolonged outage event.

Eversource understands the needs of its medically coded customers. While we cannot prioritize individual customer restoration during a widespread outage, we do take precautions to prepare our most vulnerable customers in advance of the event and follow up to help them get assistance if they need it.