

Testimony of Representative Ezequiel Santiago
Energy and Technology Committee
Tuesday, March 17, 2015

House Bill #6022, AN ACT CONCERNING THERMAL ENERGY TRANSPORTATION
COMPANIES IN THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT

Chairmen Doyle & Reed and members of the Energy Committee, thank you for the opportunity to address you today. We are here in support of House Bill 6022 as it was originally proposed.

In the original language in HB 6022, the Bridgeport Thermal Energy District would receive Class 1 Renewable Energy Credits (REC) for the thermal energy produced. The current draft requires PURA to open a docket on the matter, however, we encourage you to consider the original legislation as the uncertainty and delay of REC support threatens the project from moving forward.

The world is moving towards District Energy as it is highly efficient and beneficial to the environment. It is anticipated that 41 buildings will connect to the system initially, resulting in a 71% reduction in greenhouse gases. This translates to over 9,500 tons of carbon dioxide removed from the air each year. As the system expands, the air quality benefits will continue to increase.

The economic benefits to the City are substantial - over \$ 50 million in direct economic benefit during construction and the creation of 20 full time jobs. The reduction in energy costs for district customers will serve as a catalyst for economic growth.

Most of the customers presently use natural gas for heating. As District Energy customers decouple from gas, it will decrease demand on the presently constrained gas pipeline. The system will also provide chilled water for air conditioning. The water is chilled during off peak hours, stored, and then deployed during peak hours, which conserves and reduces electricity consumption.

The sources of heat for the system hot water are existing class 1 and 2 generating plants. They include a waste to energy plant and several fuel cells. The operating efficiency of these plants increases dramatically. Using waste heat that would

otherwise be vented into the atmosphere is a desirable goal that we can achieve in Bridgeport.

This cutting edge approach to energy is within our grasp and with REC support the project will likely start construction in 2016. We ask for your support of the legislation as originally proposed.