



CONNECTICUT AFL-CIO

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Testimony of the Connecticut AFL-CIO

Before the Energy and Technology Committee

Tuesday February 24th, 2015

Good Afternoon Senator Doyle, Representative Reed, and members of the Energy and Technology Committee. My name is Lori Pelletier, Executive Secretary Treasurer of the Connecticut AFL-CIO.

I am here today to testify on behalf of the 900 affiliated local unions representing members from all 169 cities and towns of Connecticut regarding the following:

We support Proposed S.B. 570 An Act Concerning Electric Savings and Fixed Bill Fees

Connecticut's residential customers now pay the highest (\$19.25/month; Eversource) and second highest (\$17.25/month; UI) monthly fixed charge for any major electric utility in the region. Eversource's Connecticut small business customers have seen fixed charges jump nearly 80% since 2007 (increasing from about \$25/month to \$44.50/month).

The CT Roundtable on Climate and Jobs is a partnership between the Interreligious Eco-Justice Network (IREJN) and the CT AFL-CIO. Since 2012, we have been strengthening the collaboration among the state's labor, religious and environmental communities, moving beyond the "jobs vs. environment" frame to advocate more effectively for public policies that both protect the climate and create good jobs here in Connecticut. Besides Proposed S.B. 570, we also support bills on today's agenda that would lower and cap the fixed charge for electric service for residential customers as well as those bills that support electric rate transparency.

Public service companies are considered entities essential to the public interest. Public interest also includes energy conservation which has been encouraged by public service companies. One would think that energy conservation would lower energy pricing. In fact the opposite appears to be the reality. Lower demand equates to higher pricing due to the corporations demands for profitability over the needs of the public's interest.

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If public service companies want investment in their infrastructure, perhaps they should turn to their investors, not their ratepayers. As these companies initiatives are driven by closing service centers, outsourcing work to out of state and out of country workers while overburdening the current workforce, we oppose the following:

Proposed S.B. No. 213 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PARTIAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION FOR NEWLY INSTALLED OR IMPROVED PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY INFRASTRUCTURE. Without measures of increased service provided to the public and burdens eased on the current workforce, why is this necessary to increase the profits of these entities?

Proposed H.B. No. 5467 AN ACT CONCERNING EMERGENCY REPAIR OF UTILITY POLES. Our I.B.E.W. affiliates and our C.W.A. affiliates have been carrying out this work and have replaced poles in an expedient, safe manner restoring service to the public for decades. This is another attempt by the public service companies to privatize and outsource their workforce.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Pelletier
Executive Secretary Treasurer, Connecticut AFL-CIO

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