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BILL FINCH
Mayor

February 24, 2015

Energy and Technology Committee
Connecticut General Assembly
Legislative Office Building, Room 3600
300 Capital Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2015
SB 570: AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTRIC SAVINGS AND FIXED BILL
FEES (<http://www.cga.ct.gov/2015/TOB/S/2015SB-00570-R00-SB.htm>)

Dear Senator Doyle, Representative Reed and Committee Members:

Thanks to Senator Doyle, Representative Reed, and members of the committee for the opportunity to provide testimony on an act to reduce, cap or eliminate electric distribution companies' residential fixed customer bill charges.

As the mayor of our state's largest city, my greatest priority is creating a place where our kids and grandkids will choose to live, work and raise their families. And creating green jobs and producing clean energy is a major factor in achieving that goal. That is why I created BGreen2020, our citywide initiative to promote clean energy and sustainable living.

Since then, we have opened Bridgeport's Eco-Technology Park, which employs hundreds of people in green jobs and helps our environment. We are home to North America's largest fuel cell, one of the region's largest low-emission natural gas fueling station, and a biodiesel facility that's currently expanding its operation. And soon, we'll put 9,000 solar panels over a former landfill.

As you can see, clean energy is key to our city's economic future.

That is why I am supportive of this bill (S.B. 570). This legislation would tackle high fixed charges for electricity, which are extremely unfair and regressive.

Today, Connecticut citizens pay some of the highest fixed charges in New England for electricity. And now, we may have to pay even more. In November, the Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority approved fixed rate charges to go up from \$16 per month to \$19.25 per month.

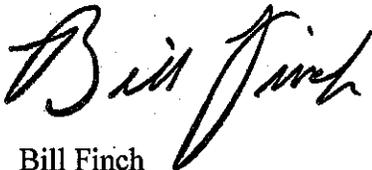
We need to be looking for ways to reduce energy costs, as we have been doing through clean energy, not protect a last-century energy policy. This bill is a positive step in ensuring that happens.

I agree with U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal that fixed fees "hit consumers before they even turn on a single light, discouraging and devaluing conservation and efficiency measures and damaging our economy." This bill gives consumers more power over their consumption by focusing less weight on fixed charges and more weight on energy usage. In turn, it gives more incentive for consumers to pursue clean energy methods, such as weatherization, installation of rooftop solar panels, and buying more efficient appliances.

In closing, I urge all members of the committee to strongly consider passing this legislation. Let us contribute to the continued progress of our green and sustainability revolution here in the great state of Connecticut.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Finch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping tail on the "h".

Bill Finch
Mayor