

February 24, 2015

To Honorable Senator Doyle, Representative Reed and members of the Energy and Technology Committee,

I urge you to pass Senate Bill 570, An Act Concerning Electric Savings and Fixed Bill Fees, out of committee, and work within your caucuses to see passage of reduced and capped fixed distribution charges through the General Assembly.

As homeowners, my husband and I have worked diligently to reduce our energy consumption and electricity costs. We use motion sensors and timers for exterior lighting, and dimmers in rooms with multiple overhead lighting sources. We've invested hundreds of dollars to convert almost every socket in our house to LED lighting. We've invested thousands installing solar photovoltaic panels on a south facing roof. As this investment dramatically impacted our savings and relative short-term earning potential, we look for the shortest time period possible for payback on this investment, projected for 8-9 years.

I now work only seasonally for a small, independent business, Mahogany Shoppe on Main Street in Glastonbury. This employer used to staff people throughout the year, but now only relies on additional help during the busiest season. During this period of economic downturn, this business has been saddled with almost an 80% increase in its fixed electricity charges since 2007.

My career has involved working with impoverished citizens in subsidized housing and those facing food insecurity. Do not allow the utility companies to make their buck on the back of these citizens.

Regressive, high fixed charges need to be eliminated. Efficiency and clean energy initiatives need to be encouraged by allowing customers the benefit of maximum savings and shortest payback. Small businesses that are the heart of our economic recovery need not be penalized, but instead allowed to benefit by adopting energy efficiencies. Connecticut's most vulnerable citizens need relief.

Lower and cap all fixed charges now at \$10 for residences and \$25 for small businesses, benefitting all customers and distribution companies that can instead rely on a revenue neutral system to guarantee service. Your leadership is needed to increase energy efficiencies, reduce overall costs to consumers, and reduce impacts and costs to CT to mitigate damages associated with climate change.

Thank you,

Jennifer Siskind
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