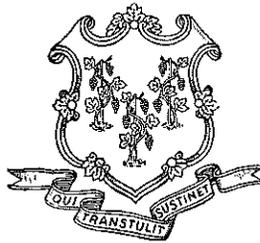


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Testimony to the Energy and Technology Committee

Proposed SB 573 AAC Variable Electric Rates Electric & Proposed SB 575 AAC Electric Rate Transparency

February 24, 2015

Chairman Doyle, Chairman Reed, Vice Chairs, Ranking Members, and distinguished members of the Energy and Technology Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony in support of **SB 573 An Act Concerning Variable Electric Rates** and **SB 575 An Act Concerning Electric Rate Transparency**.

SB 573 An Act Concerning Variable Electric Rates will ban variable rates charged to residential electric customers for electric generation. When Connecticut opened the door to competitive choice for electric suppliers, insuring consumer protections from matters like deceptive marketing practices and price gouging became new issues for us to resolve. Customers meeting door to door sales people were not informed about "teaser rates" that would increase over a short time, cancellation fees, and the unpredictable jumps in variable rates that required us to step in with legislation last year. SB 573 will go further to insuring that seniors and working families have some additional protections from plans that can wipe out potential savings and insure that the plan a customer is told they are signing up for is the plan the customer receives.

SB 575 An Act Concerning Electric Rate Transparency will require that more opportunities for public comment are provided by PURA when deliberating on proposed rate hikes. As everyone on this committee is aware, the recent rate increases from Eversource and United Illuminating came with a great amount of "sticker shock" to ratepayers and to us as legislators. Connecticut has the second highest energy rates in the nation. We have the highest rates in New England and during the cold winter months the impact of that cost on seniors and working families only gets worse. SB 570 would require that more opportunities for public participation be provided by PURA, insuring that customers throughout Connecticut are afforded the opportunity to have an input as ratepayers when proposed increases may squeeze their incomes more than they can afford.

Without necessary consumer protections, increased transparency, and a rate structure that can reflect what our residents in this state can afford to provide, we as a state put ourselves in a regressive pattern that will only do more long term harm to the well-being of our most vulnerable. Our residents are caught in a cycle where consuming less energy will still in the end not provide any savings. These increases not only are a greater economic burden to families and cost to small business. I thank the Committee for your time and consideration of these important matters, and ask for your support in raising both these bills out of Committee.

Respectfully submitted,



State Senator Gayle Slossberg