

To all whom it may concern,
please bear with me:

I feel very strongly about the trees & people of this great state.
One reason people want to live & work & visit here is because we have a beautiful state.

These crews & companies have come through our neighborhood several times.
They relentlessly put pressure on me to cut beautiful small softwood trees that would never, & never have, be able to do the damage of other larger hardwood trees to pole or lines.
I trim my own trees safely every year, or as needed.
New plantings of trees should be regulated first, via setbacks for developers, builders, & homeowners.

I believe the crews were not trained arborists, just "cutters & ground-work laborers" (with virtually no training in tree care) who were only interested in making money on each trimming contract.
Of greater concern was the inability to communicate my rights or wishes, as my crews spoke little English.
Even the people with undocumented "tree knowledge" were merely trying to sell some specious arguments to pressurize me into destroying my trees.

It is a somewhat traumatizing experience to go through this, especially for someone who knows how the great tree-lined roads of Connecticut bring enormous value to real estate & tremendous beauty to our state's quality of life.
I do not know about you, but I have rigorously defended my little trees, & my property value, from these crews who could care less about the fantastic & obvious aesthetic contribution to all our lives, from children to seniors growing up with them.

Now, especially with the newer excessive rigid eight (8 !!) foot cut back area (I remember when it was 4 feet!), all I get to see now is wires & poles when travelling thru some parts of the state.

It is a form of rape that is happening, a visual destruction...

Why invest money here in homes if these rules offer no protection for established, older trees.
This state is frankly getting pretty ugly.

I also do not recall the utilities going out of business because of the occasional weather event, most make enormous amounts of money.

If all of the wired utilities want save more more money on repairing these systems they designed, then maybe they should all be made to invest more in underground infrastructure as we see in urban areas, new developments & more upscale areas.
Maybe it is time for long term thinking, steadily force them to prioritize to begin to do begin burying lines in vital corridors & radiating out into local neighborhoods that are closest to city

cores (where lines are already buried), then further outward, thus also possibly saving many lives in denser populated areas.

In my experience these issues are not often addressed.

Every tree in my neighborhood that was "trimmed" has become diseased, died, or now no longer resembles a natural tree form.

This state is not really getting safer without making real substantive improvements, just uglier. All this cutting will likely not improve system reliability for customers, but benefits utilities & investors only.

I think you should consider your mandate to serve the people. We could have trees & utilities in the same spaces coexisting. It would be safer & look great, too.

Do we want to turn our vacation-destination state into a visual nightmare of wires & poles to satisfy utilities?

Do we want to continue to allow the utilities to hire unqualified tree workers (are crews tested?) unfamiliar with our various species to just cut with reckless abandon?

Do you think one side effect of these pressurized & ever-widening rights-of-way just may make our state an ugly, less-desirable place to visit?

Do you think this policy & pressure will likely influence decisions of the poor & less affluent to agree to bow to this pressure even more, since your decision to make them financially responsible is likely to hurt them more?

Do you think it is time to find viable alternatives to poles & wires?

Firstly, I **MUST** have the right to say "NO" to these people as a homeowner & taxpayer. Do not invoke eminent domain.

Thank you,

Mark Palmer
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I sure do feel like my trees will now be targeted, having written this.

But this policy is completely getting out of control due to a few weather events, to the detriment of people's lives & pockets.

The state of CT will regret passing this without these HB 5602, & further future, amendments. I feel this outlandish, one-sided policy will be a great & centuries-lasting error to the economy of this great state.

Once the mistake is recognized, it will not grow back for a long time.

You will create, I hope, endless & more costly lawsuits than these rigid draconian tree removal "solutions" seek to solve.

Should crews & utilities that cause irreparable damage to trees, that kills them later, then be responsible for paying to remove them later at no cost to the homeowner?

Should they also pay to replace them?

I think so.

I see no protections for owners from these often less-skilled crews, really acting out of greed, since a tree cut is just "job security" as I have experienced this "system."

I can see this becoming an environmental & quality-of-life boondoggle that will be used to as a prime example in history books

(& to name CT & its short-sighted companies & politicians) for all future generations to say: "What were they thinking?"

Are you really thinking, or just over-reacting?

Fyi

UTILITY TREE REMOVAL AND PRUNING

United Illuminating has submitted a plan to the Public Utility Regulatory Authority (PURA) which calls for eventual removal of all trees and branches, except right tree/right place trees, within 8 feet on either side of its electric distribution wires from ground to sky (now known as the Utility Protection Zone or UPZ).

CL&P plans call for such removal under or near its distribution wires in much more of its territory than in the past. These plans apply to all towns and cities within UI or CL&P territory

To see what could happen to your street and roadside trees, look up at the electric distribution wires (the top wires) and measure 8 feet to the left and right, ground to sky. ***Any tall tree or tall growing tree within the UPZ is scheduled to be removed under the UI and CL&P plans, whether it is hazardous or healthy. If not removed, it may be severely pruned.***

Specific personal examples of past or potential negative impact on your home, business, neighborhood or town, because of the use of rigid line clearances (previously used only by CL&P), would be helpful. If you don't want to speak, it is still important to attend to show your concern.

You may send a written comment to PURA before or after the meetings. There will be a short period after the meetings in which PURA will welcome written public comments, and these may be particularly effective if based on what occurred at the meetings.

Written comments should include a reference to Docket No. 12-01-10, and be sent by e-mail to Pura.executivesecretary@ct.gov and Nicholas.neeley@ct.gov or via U.S. mail to PURA, 10 Franklin Square, New Britain, CT 06051

PURA's final decision in this docket regarding utility tree pruning and removal will apply to both utilities. PURA's draft decision in this docket approves the use of ETT/ETR.