



Testimony of Eric Brown
Counsel for Energy and Environmental Policy
Connecticut Business & Industry Association
before the
Environment Committee
February 19, 2016

RE: H.B. No. 5150 AN ACT CONCERNING TREE WARDENTS' NOTICES ON TREES AND SHRUBS PRIOR TO REMOVAL, TREE REMOVAL ALONG STATE HIGHWAYS AND CLEAN-UP BY PUBLIC UTILITY CORPORATIONS FOLLOWING CERTAIN TREE REMOVAL.

CBIA opposes this bill.

The Connecticut Business & Industry Association ("CBIA") is Connecticut's largest statewide businesses organization representing thousands of large and small businesses that employ hundreds of thousands of Connecticut citizens.

CBIA appreciates the important role that our trees and shrubs play in creating healthy ecosystems and contributing to the high quality of life in our beautiful state.

However, it is also clear that recent tree-trimming efforts throughout the state designed to mitigate the damage and public health risks fallen trees can cause during heavy storms, has been measurably successful.

For example, officials at Eversource Energy indicate that their customers saw a 50% improvement in reliability in 2015 and were able to count on reliable power 99.98% of the time, day and night, even in stormy weather.

Therefore, there is a question of balance and a consideration of the pragmatic that must come into play here.

CBIA believes this bill, which would require the local tree wardens to "make a posting on each tree, shrub or group of shrubs" and require a public hearing "if any person, firm or corporation objects to the proposed cutting or removal, in whole or in part", does not represent the correct balance and will unreasonably hinder future progress in protecting the public and improving the resiliency of our transportation and electricity infrastructures.

Accordingly, CBIA respectfully requests H.B. 5150 be rejected.

CBIA greatly appreciates this opportunity to submit comment on H.B. 5150.