



Environment Committee

February 19, 2106

Testimony in Opposition to:

House Bill 5150, "An Act Concerning Tree Wardens' Notices on Trees and Shrubs Prior to Removal, Tree Removal Along State Highways and Clean-Up by Public Utility Corporations Following Certain Tree Removal"

Submitted By: Paul Quick, SVP and General Manager, Frontier Communications

Chairman Kennedy, Chairman Albis, Senator Chapin and Representative Shaban, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to *House Bill 5150, "An Act Concerning Tree Wardens' Notices on Trees and Shrubs Prior to Removal, Tree Removal Along State Highways and Clean-Up by Public Utility Corporations Following Certain Tree Removal."*

Section 2 of HB 5150 would require the town Tree Warden to "make a posting on each tree, shrub or group of shrubs for which such a permit is sought" and further, to hold a public hearing "if any person, firm or corporation objects to the proposed cutting or removal, in whole or in part." These requirements will not only place an additional burden to, in most cases, voluntary/part-time town Tree Wardens but will create delays for public utilities performing necessary and sometimes emergent tree trimming work. To require a volunteer Tree Warden to call and conduct a public hearing every time someone objects to tree trimming is unnecessary, as there is already a mechanism in place for people who object to utility tree trimming; Public Act 14-151, established a comprehensive tree trimming process.

Section 2(f) of this bill refers to the current standard applicable to public utilities, requiring them to apply, in writing, to the town Tree Warden for a permit to cut or remove, in whole or in part, any tree or shrub, or part thereof, which lies within the limits of any public road or grounds. Adding the additional requirements as proposed in Section 2 of this bill will result in undue delays, which in light of the historic storms of 2011 and 2012 the State cannot afford.

For these reasons we respectfully request that you not take action on this bill.