

Statement of The United Illuminating Company

TO THE ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE – March 10, 2016

Proposed H.B. No. 5509 - AN ACT CONCERNING STAFFING LEVELS FOR ELECTRIC SERVICE LINEWORKERS

The United Illuminating Company (UI), a division of the AVANGRID/UIIL Holdings Corporation, would like to offer comments on proposed **House Bill 5509 - AN ACT CONCERNING STAFFING LEVELS FOR ELECTRIC SERVICE LINEWORKERS**.

UI has serious concerns with the proposed bill and urges the committee to reject it. Setting minimum standards for staffing will lead to increased costs to ratepayers and workforce inefficiency.

UI's staffing numbers, especially for lineworkers, are based on current and forecasted work load (both for capital and O&M construction projects and system maintenance) and approved by Connecticut's Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) each year. Setting minimum staffing levels based on the number of customers does not equate to what is needed to maintain the electric distribution system and to provide an effective response to restoration efforts. In addition, other factors, such as maintenance cycles, the geographic size of a company's service area and its reliability objectives, need to be considered.

The electric distribution companies' current staffing levels are appropriate and under the auspices of PURA. Overstaffing of lineworkers will result in a less productive work force, and will become a cost issue, which is ultimately borne by electric ratepayers.

UI continuously monitors work load and staffing requirements on a monthly basis to determine the appropriate line worker staffing levels. The need for additional resources, whether it be during periods of heavy work load and/or in emergency situations, is efficiently managed through the use of outside contractors and mutual assistance from neighboring utilities. This approach enables the EDC to effectively and cost-efficiently scale up or down to the appropriate staffing level to meet both customer and system work load requirements.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments on proposed House Bill 5509.

If you have additional questions, please contact Al Carbone, UIL Government Relations Manager, at (203) 671-4421 or albert.carbone@uinet.com.