



QUESTIONS FOR THE PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY NOMINEE

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PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY (PURA)

PURA is governed by three utility commissioners, all of whom are appointed by the governor, with the legislature's advice and consent.

PURA regulates the rates and services of investor-owned utility companies, like Eversource, United Illuminating, Yankee Gas, and CT Water. Among other things, it also licenses the state's retail electric suppliers and conducts various studies and investigations into utility-related issues.

PURA is administratively within the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), but funded through a charge paid by the companies it regulates.

QUESTIONS

1. Having served as a deputy commissioner at DEEP for the past several years, what lessons will you take with you into the utility commissioner position? Since PURA is organizationally within DEEP, how important is it for PURA to have independence from DEEP?
2. PURA's most high-profile decisions tend to be on electric distribution company rates. Can you describe the process by which PURA comes to these decisions? To what extent should PURA consider comments from the general public and legislators when deciding these cases?
3. The state's renewable portfolio standard (RPS) law requires electric companies and competitive suppliers to procure 20% of their power from renewable and other clean energy resources by 2020. What are the benefits of such a goal? Is it realistic? What impact will it have on electric rates?
4. Does the state need to reconsider the way it regulates electric rates in order to accommodate the greater use of renewable and distributed energy resources? Do current rate structures, and the rate making process, fairly distribute the costs and benefits of renewable energy among all ratepayers?



5. Over the past several years, many customers of electric retail suppliers have complained about drastic price spikes, particularly during the winter heating season. While much of this is due to seasonal price increases in the wholesale electricity market, to what extent should PURA investigate claims that some suppliers may be using deceptive marketing or billing practices or otherwise being “bad actors?” Does PURA have sufficient enforcement authority and capacity to effectively police retail suppliers? Have the recent consumer protection reforms enacted by the legislature been effective?
6. In recent years, the legislature has enacted laws that allow the DEEP commissioner to solicit proposals for power generation and other energy-related products and services (e.g., [PA 13-303](#), [PA 15-107](#)). If the proposals meet certain criteria, the commissioner can direct the electric companies to enter into long-term contracts under the proposals, subject to PURA’s review of whether the contracts are in ratepayers’ best interests. As a PURA commissioner, how will you define and evaluate what is in ratepayers’ best interests?
7. DEEP’s 2013 Comprehensive Energy Strategy (CES) included several measures to encourage greater use of natural gas and expansion of the local natural gas distribution system. Since that time, electricity markets have experienced several price spikes related to limited pipeline capacity in the interstate natural gas transmission system. As someone who helped develop the 2013 CES, do you think the state should continue to encourage greater use of natural gas? If so, how should the costs of this expansion be spread among the gas companies, current customers, and new customers? How will your role in developing the CES while at DEEP impact your decisions as a PURA commissioner?
8. PURA recently ruled that it has jurisdiction over siting small cell or other similar telecommunications equipment on existing utility poles and, under certain circumstances, new utility poles installed in the public rights-of-way ([Docket 16-06-38](#)). When making decisions about siting these facilities, how will PURA’s process and criteria differ from those used by the Connecticut Siting Council? To what extent will PURA consider environmental factors, public opinions, and input from municipal leaders?

9. By law, the Department of Public Health, DEEP, and PURA have jurisdiction over different aspects of regulating the state's water supply. Does this make it more difficult for PURA to regulate water companies or for the state to have a comprehensive water plan and policy? Have the different agencies been able to successfully work together, particularly when they are evaluating small water systems in financial difficulty that may need to be acquired by another entity?

10. Since you also chair the Board of Directors of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and represent the administration on the Board of Managers of the New England States Committee on Electricity (NESCOE), how do you think Connecticut's utility regulatory system compares with the other New England states? Is there anything that the other states are doing, particularly regarding rate setting, which Connecticut should adopt? Is there anything that the region's utility regulators could be doing on a collective, regional basis that would help the state's ratepayers?

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