



Appropriations, Commerce, Finance, Revenue and Bonding, and Planning and Development Committees

March 23, 2018

Testimony Concerning:

The Report of the Commission on Fiscal Stability and Economic Growth

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Chairman Osten, Chairman Formica, Chairman Fonfara, Chairman Frantz, Chairman Hartley, Chairman Cassano, Chairman Logan, Chairman Walker, Chairman Lemar, Chairman Simmons, Chairman Rojas, Representative Ziobron, Representative Davis, Representative Yaccarino, Representative Zawistowski and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony concerning *The Report of the Commission on Fiscal Stability and Economic Growth*.

Frontier appreciates the time and effort the Commission has dedicated to completing its Report on Fiscal Stability and Economic Growth. The process of compiling the incredible volume of necessary information as well as the painstaking review of it required considerable and impressive effort. As a whole, the Report is reflective of this.

There is, however, a recommendation in the Report that will have serious negative implications, which would stymie, not promote, economic growth in Connecticut. Specifically, that municipalities be allowed to charge utilities fees for the use of the public rights of way.

Elsewhere in the Commission's Report, the Commission recognizes that Connecticut faces many challenges to its competitiveness, including high costs for electricity prices. Acknowledging this, it is critical that the state not make this problem worse.

Charging utilities for the use of rights of way would substantially raise rates for consumers, both residential and business, on vital services—electricity, gas, water, and telecommunications—and further exacerbate the state's challenging business climate. Moreover, the implementation of this policy would have the disastrous result of further increasing energy costs, which already rank among the **highest** in the nation. Further, charging telecommunications providers for use of rights of way would put at risk the state's robust and expansive broadband services networks, which are currently rated amongst the **best** in the nation. Thus, this proposal would have the exact opposite effect of what the Commission is trying to foster.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that no action be taken on this specific proposal.