Bill No.: SB-889
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING THE PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY’S INVESTIGATION OF LOST AND UNACCOUNTED FOR GAS.
Vote Date: 3/19/2019
Vote Action: JOINT FAVORABLE
PH Date: 2/26/2019
File No.: 453

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SPONSORS OF BILL:
Energy and Technology Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:
The bill was created to modify the manner in which Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) investigates lost and unaccounted for gas (LAUF) throughout the state of Connecticut. The bill would trigger an investigation by PURA of a gas company if the leaked portion of LAUF is greater than 1.5% when it previously was set at 3%.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:
John W. Betkoski – Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA): PURA is in support of this bill which changes the way PURA presents its annual report detailing lost and unaccounted for gas (LAUF) to the legislature. They support the bill and the change that triggers an investigation of LAUF to 1.5% from 3%. They also support how the bill will modify the reporting from a calendar year to on a 12 month basis. They feel this bill will allow them to investigate more accurately all LAUF.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:
Bret Factora – Eversource: Eversource is in support of the intent of the bill however feel that modifications should be made regarding the language and that change should be that PURA should investigate the LAUF based on the percentage of total leaked gas compared to the total throughput of natural gas. They suggest language changes and using the “throughput” measure which measures loss as a percent of the total amount of gas delivered is a more accurate way of triggering the investigation. Eversource feels Connecticut’s current programs around leak fixes are useful in helping the efforts to account for the missing gas as well but leaks are only one part of the total missing gas and should be considered in that manner.
Ann Gadwah – Sierra Club Connecticut: The Sierra Club is in support of bill but suggest amendments being made to lower the trigger for investigation to 1% from the current 1.5% language. The Sierra Club states the leaks of methane is exceptionally harmful towards the environment and states the effects are more damaging than those of burning fossil fuels. The Sierra Club is in support of PURA handling the concerns and investigations around leaked gas but thinks the language should be strengthened to help combat the negative environmental impacts of leaked gas. They also request that the gas companies use the money they receive from charging for the LAUF on billing statements towards the repairs to the gas lines that are leaking.

Patrick McDonnell – UIL Holdings Corporation: UIL is in support of this bill and backs PURA’s opportunity to review and investigate leaks in the gas systems and direct how the gas companies should handle repairing the leaks. UIL feels fast-tracking the replacement of faulty gas lines will help the state of Connecticut save energy and reduce the emissions of pollutants.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:
None offered

Reported by: Ethan J. Meskill Date: 3/28/19