

Energy and Technology Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 19, 2019

10:30 AM in Room 2B of the LOB

The meeting was called to order at 10:34 AM by Chairman, Sen. Needleman N. S33.

The following committee members were present:

Senators: Fonfara J. S01; Formica P. S20; Lesser M. S09; Needleman N. S33

Representatives: Ackert T. 008; Allie-Brennan R. 002; Arconti D. 109; Buckbee B. 067; Cheeseman H. 037; Davis C. 057; de la Cruz J. 041; Demicco M. 021; Elliott J. 088; Ferraro C. 117; Gresko J. 121; Lanoue B. 045; Lopes R. 024; Meskers S. 150; Napoli R. 073; Perone C. 137; Petit W. 022; Piscopo J. 076; Steinberg J. 136; Tercyak P. 026; Winkler M. 056

Absent were:

Senators:

Representatives:

- I. CONVENE MEETING
Chairman Sen. Needleman convened the meeting at 10:34 AM, and then called for an immediate recess to allow each party to caucus. The meeting reconvened at 11:38 AM.
- II. REMARKS BY THE CHAIRS

Sen. Needleman makes a remark and thanks everyone on the committee for working collaboratively and effectively as a committee.

III. BILLS FOR REVIEW

1. [S.B. No. 960](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING MEMBERS OF THE CONNECTICUT GREEN BANK BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND THE PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY'S REVIEW OF CLAIMS ARISING FROM CONTRACTS PREVIOUSLY APPROVED BY THE AUTHORITY. (ET)

Sen. Needleman called for a motion to JFS To the floor.

The motion was made by Rep. Arconti and seconded by Rep. Ferraro

Sen. Needleman asked for comments and discussion. There were no comments.

Sen. Needleman called for a roll call vote on the motion JFS [S.B. No. 960](#) to the floor. **The motion; 25 yea, 0 nea, 0 abstain, 0 absent and not voting.**

2. [H.B. No. 7154](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING A SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION CODE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION'S RETENTION OF CONSULTANTS FOR PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY. (ET)

Sen. Needleman called for a motion to JFS [H.B. No. 7154](#)

The motion was made by Rep. Arconti and seconded by Rep. Ferraro

Sen. Needleman asked for comments and discussion.

Rep. Ferraro commented. Rep. Ferraro stated he would be a "YES" vote on the bill, however, has a concern with the involvement of DEEP regarding building codes.

Rep. Buckbee stated he would be voting yes, however, has a concern regarding charging stations and would like to see more work put into the issue. Rep. Buckbee will reevaluate the bill when it comes to the house floor.

Rep. Davis commented. Rep. Davis stated he would be voting "NO" due to his issue with the electric charging stations.

Sen. Needleman called for a roll call vote on the motion JFS [H.B. No. 7154](#) to the floor. **The motion; 21 yea, 4 nea, 0 abstain, 0 absent and not voting.**

3. [S.B. No. 847](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE REGULATION OF VOICE SERVICE PROVIDERS. (ET)

Sen. Needleman called for a motion to JF to the Floor [S.B. No. 847](#)

The motion was made by Rep. Arconti and seconded by Rep. Ferraro

Sen. Needleman asked for comments and discussion.

Rep. Ackert commented. Rep. Ackert stated he would vote "YES" on the bill out of committee, however, would like to reach out to those opposing the legislation to discuss the concerns around the bill.

Sen. Needleman called for a roll call vote on the motion JF [S.B. No. 847](#) to the floor. **The motion; 18 yea, 7 nea, 0 abstain, 0 absent and not voting.**

4. [S.B. No. 846](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE MUNICIPAL GAIN, THE PREPARATION OF UTILITY POLES AND ENTERPRISE FUNDS FOR MUNICIPAL BROADBAND SERVICES. (ET)

Sen. Needleman called for a motion to JFS to the Floor

The motion was made by Rep. Arconti and seconded by Rep. Ferraro

Sen. Needleman asked for comments and discussion.

Rep. Davis commented and feels the current JFS language is moving in the right direction; however, has concerns regarding government entities being in direct competition with public utilities. Rep. Davis stated he will be voting "NO" in the committee but is open to reconsidering as it moves to the floor.

Sen. Formica commented. Sen. Formica stated that he aligns his comments with Rep. Davis and will be voting "NO" in committee but depending on any language changes may reconsider the vote when the bill reaches the floor.

Rep. de la Cruz commented. Rep. de la Cruz aligns his comments with Rep. Davis and Sen. Formica. Rep. de la Cruz commented on electric companies in Groton tried this experiment and it cost the city a lot of money and the ratepayers that had to make up the . Rep. de la Cruz stated he will be voting "NO" in committee and will vote "NO" if the bill passes committee.

Rep. Cheeseman commented. Rep. Cheeseman aligns her comments with Rep. de la Cruz regarding concerns with municipalities who do not have access to utilities.

Sen. Needleman called for a roll call vote on the motion JFS [S.B. No. 846](#) to the floor. **The motion; 18 yea, 7 nea, 0 abstain, 0 absent and not voting.**

5. [H.B. No. 7155](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING CONSUMER PROTECTIONS FOR CUSTOMERS OF ELECTRIC SUPPLIERS. (ET)

Sen. Needleman called for a motion to JFS [H.B. No. 7155](#)

The motion was made by Rep. Arconti and seconded by Rep. Ferraro

Sen. Needleman asked for comments and discussion.

Rep. Ferraro commented. Rep. Ferraro stated that while he understands the reasons behind the bill and applauds the idea, he will be voting "NO". Rep. Ferraro said he feels the bill is overreaching and voting No to flag it for his caucus

Sen. Formica commented. Sen. Formica stated he would be voting "NO". Sen. Formica commented on the possible conversations happening to improve the bill moving forward.

Rep. Meskers commented that he would be voting "YES". Rep. Meskers commented that he thinks enhanced regulation of third-party suppliers is a reasonable decision. Rep. Meskers commented that he recognizes the bill is not perfect, yet feels it moves in the right direction. Rep. Meskers stated he is not pleased with the regulatory environment being skewed in favor of the customer.

Rep. Arconti commented. Rep. Arconti stated he aligns his comments with Sen. Formica and Rep. Arconti said he will be voting "YES" in committee but feels the bill is still a work in progress.

Rep. Davis commented. Rep. Davis stated he recognizes the need to have greater regulation regarding protecting the customer with recording all conversations. Rep. Davis said he's concerned with the affirmative opt-in on renewal with ratepayer contracts. Rep. Davis stated he would be voting "NO" but looks forward to furthering the discussion.

Rep. Ackert commented. Rep. Ackert aligned his comments with Rep. Davis concerning customer recording to protect consumers. Rep. Ackert stated will be voting "NO" until the bill is cleaned up.

Rep. Buckbee commented. Rep. Buckbee stated he aligns himself with the other members regarding protecting customers from being recorded. Rep. Buckbee said he will be voting "NO" on the bill and hopes to make modifications to protect consumers better

Rep. Cheeseman commented. Rep. Cheeseman commented she feels the bill paints "to broad a brush" and could punish the good companies. Rep. Cheeseman stated she would be voting "NO".

Sen. Needleman called for a roll call vote on the motion JFS [H.B. No. 7155](#) to the floor. **The motion; 16 yea, 8 nea, 1 abstain, 0 absent and not voting.**

6. [H.B. No. 5181](#) (COMM) AN ACT REQUIRING THE PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY TO STUDY THE CREATION OF A NEW RATE CLASS FOR GAS COMPANIES. (ET,ET)

Sen. Needleman called for a motion to JFS [H.B. No. 5181](#)

The motion was made by Rep. Arconti and seconded by Rep. Ferraro

Sen. Needleman asked for comments and discussion.

No Discussion

Sen. Needleman called for a roll call vote on the motion JFS [H.B. No. 5181](#) to the floor. **The motion; 25 yea, 0 nea, 0 abstain, 0 absent and not voting.**

7. [H.B. No. 5002](#) (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING A GREEN ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION. (ET,ET)

Sen. Needleman called for a motion to JFS [H.B. No. 5002](#) (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING A GREEN ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION. (ET,ET)

The motion was made by Rep. Arconti and seconded by Rep. Ferraro

Sen. Needleman asked for comments and discussion.

Sen. Formica commented and thanked the chairs for their work on the bill and the committee for putting it forward while reserving the right to look at what is added to it in the future.

Rep. Steinberg commented to echo Sen. Formica in commending the chairs. Rep. Steinberg feels more actions can be taken and looks forward to the dialogue to strengthen the bill.

Rep. Ferraro commented. Rep. Ferraro commended the committee and the leadership for their work on the bill and handling the concerns. Rep. Ferraro stated he is in strong support of the bill.

Sen. Needleman called for a roll call vote on the motion JFS [H.B. No. 5002](#) to the floor. **The motion; 25 yea, 0 nea, 0 abstain, 0 absent and not voting.**

8. [H.B. No. 5687](#) (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTRIC SUPPLIER ELECTRIC GENERATION SERVICE RATES AND CUSTOMER BILLS. (ET,ET)

Sen. Needleman called for a motion to JFS [H.B. No. 5687](#)

The motion was made by Rep. Arconti and seconded by Rep. Ferraro

Sen. Needleman asked for comments and discussion.

Rep. Demicco commented. Rep. Demicco states he will have difficulty supporting the bill due to testimony submitted by PURA and AARP in opposition. Rep. Demicco he will vote "NO" on the bill.

Rep. Meskers commented. Rep. Meskers comments bringing up his concerns on the topic of third-party suppliers. Rep. Meskers stated he would be voting "NO" on the bill.

Sen. Needleman called for a roll call vote on the motion JFS [H.B. No. 5687](#) to the floor. **The motion; 16 yea, nea, abstain, absent and not voting.**

9. [H.B. No. 7251](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING LONG-TERM CONTRACTS FOR CERTAIN CLASS I GENERATION PROJECTS AND THE RESIDENTIAL SOLAR INVESTMENT PROGRAM AND REQUIRING A STUDY OF THE VALUE OF SOLAR. (ET)

Sen. Needleman called for a motion to JFS [H.B. No. 7251](#)

The motion was made by Rep. Arconti and seconded by Rep. Ferraro

Sen. Needleman asked for comments and discussion.

Sen. Formica commented. Sen. Formica remarks that he feels this bill is a good move going forward.

Rep. Arconti commented. Rep. Arconti commented thanking the committee for all the work and the collaboration.

Sen. Needleman commented. Sen. Needleman thanks the committee for all the work that has been accomplished and for reaching a compromise.

Rep. Meskers commented. Rep. Meskers commented by thanking the committee for the effort that has gone into the bill. Rep, Meskers brings up the concern of when moving forward in the future there is a proper timeframe for businesses to start and stop.

Sen. Needleman called for a roll call vote on the motion JFS [H.B. No. 7251](#) to the floor. **The motion; 25 yea, 0 nea, 0 abstain, 0 absent and not voting.**

10. [H.B. No. 7151](#) AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS. (ET)

Sen. Needleman called for a motion to JFS [H.B. No. 7151](#) AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS. (ET)

The motion was made by Rep. Arconti and seconded by Rep. Ferraro

Rep. Ferraro commented. Rep. Ferraro commented the bill is well intended however feels the state should not be the regulator of setting the standards.

Rep. Ackert commented. Rep. Ackert commented that he has concerns regarding retailers. Rep. Ackert questions if other New England states are on the same standards. Rep. Ackert mentions the pricing and difficulty when purchasing a new appliance.

Rep. Arconti responded to Rep. Ackert stating that the state of Vermont has already updated his standards and the states of Maine, New York, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts are also considering new measures.

Rep. Formica commented. Sen. Formica states he will be voting "NO" and hopes the bill will be taken into consideration to be modified.

Rep. Cheeseman commented. Rep. Cheeseman commented she shares Rep. Ackert concerns when it comes to buying a new appliance and the problem it can cause for customers at both ends of the income spectrum. Rep. Cheeseman stated she would be voting "NO" on the bill.

Rep. Davis commented. Rep. Davis comments on a concern with lines 864 to 873 regarding commissioner inspections. Rep. Davis commented on line 869 dealing with the commissioner coordinating with the state building inspector.

Sen. Needleman called for a roll call vote on the motion JFS [H.B. No. 7151](#) to the floor. **The motion; 16 yea, 9 nea, 0 abstain, 0 absent and not voting.**

11. [S.B. No. 961](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL ELECTRIC UTILITIES AND MUNICIPAL ELECTRIC ENERGY COOPERATIVES. (ET)

Sen. Needleman called for a motion to JFS [S.B. No. 961](#)

The motion was made by Rep. Arconti and seconded by Rep. Ferraro

Sen. Needleman asked for comments and discussion.

Sen. Formica commented. Sen. Formica comments on the importance of the bill in terms of supporting consumers and appreciates the work the committee has accomplished to reach this point.

Rep. de la Cruz commented. Rep. de la Cruz stated he would vote "NO" on the bill. Rep. de la Cruz remarks on the area of overreach and going too far in his opinion. He commented that CMEC has made the changes and he has concerns about giving the Consumer advocate \$30K to spend on consultants.

Rep. Lanoue commented. Rep. Lanoue remarks that he is upset with CMEC regarding public utilities. Rep. Lanoue feels the best way to correct the situation is to set up checks and balances. Rep. Lanoue comments in support of the committee's works and states he will be voting "YES" on the bill.

Sen. Fonfara commented. Sen. Fonfara states he will be voting "NO" in contrary to the chairs. Sen. Fonfara comments there are aspects of the bill he

does not agree with and hopes to see modifications before the bill reaches the floor.

Sen. Needleman called for a roll call vote on the motion JFS [S.B. No. 961](#) to the floor. **The motion; 22 yea, 3 nea, 0 abstain, 0 absent and not voting.**

12. [S.B. No. 889](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY'S INVESTIGATION OF LOST AND UNACCOUNTED FOR GAS. (ET)

Sen. Needleman called for a motion to JFS [S.B. No. 889](#)

The motion was made by Rep. Arconti and seconded by Rep. Ferraro

Sen. Needleman asked for comments and discussion.

No Discussion.

Sen. Needleman called for a roll call vote on the motion JFS [S.B. No. 889](#) to the floor. **The motion; 25 yea, 0 nea, 0 abstain, absent and not voting.**

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Sen. Needleman commented thanking the committee for all their help and the work accomplished.

Rep. Arconti commented thanking the committee for the hard work and thanked the ranking members, OLR, LCO, the Clerk, the policy team.

Sen. Formica commented thanking the committee and thanks to the chairs for their bi-partisan work.

Rep. Ferraro commented thanking the staff for all their hard work and comments on the pleasure of working on the committee. Rep. Ferraro praised the leadership for making the committee a bi-partisan collaboration

Rep. Arconti stated the votes would be held the votes open until 5:00 PM, at which time the meeting would be adjourned.

Rep. Arconti announced votes will be held open until 5:00.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Administrator

Ben Lovejoy
Committee Clerk