

Questions for the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority Nominee

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May 10, 2019 | 2019-R-0113

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, Connecticut Natural 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. Connecticut has begun a process to transition away from net metering (where customers are credited at retail rates for renewable energy they produce) to a tariff structure for renewables. How should these resources be compensated? What should the process to determine compensation rates entail? Which stakeholders should be included?
2. During your tenure at the Maryland Public Service Commission, the commission approved large offshore wind projects. What lessons did the commission learn through that process?
3. Maryland's electric utilities have sometimes struggled to restore power after severe weather events. What is the role of utility regulators in ensuring power is restored in a timely

manner? How should costs associated with quickly restoring power be balanced against the need to keep electric rates reasonable?

4. Connecticut's legacy telephone company has repeatedly supported legislation eliminating rate regulation for noncompetitive telephone services, including basic retail telephone service (i.e., "plain old telephone service" or "POTS") and wholesale telephone services. The company argues this regulatory change would put it on more equal footing with its competitors. Consumer advocates argue that customers still receiving rate-regulated POTS service may be vulnerable and need protection against rate increases. What oversight should PURA have over these services? If changes are needed, how should they be implemented and over what period of time?
5. Your work in Maryland included leading an electric vehicle workgroup. The Maryland Public Service Commission eventually approved an electric vehicle infrastructure program that was not as broad as originally proposed. Noting concerns that utility-owned charging networks could depress private sector interest, the commission authorized utilities to deploy and operate public charging equipment, but on a limited scale. What is the proper role of utility investment and private sector participation in electric vehicle infrastructure? Did the commission make the correct decision to scale back the program? What can you tell the committee about your work on this project?
6. PURA's most high-profile decisions tend to be on electric distribution company rates. How familiar are you with the process by which PURA comes to these decisions? How different is it from the process used in Maryland? Are there any aspects of Maryland's process that you hope to bring to PURA?
7. Over the past several years, many customers of electric retail suppliers have complained about their drastic price spikes and other deceptive marketing or billing practices. PURA recently [issued](#) a \$1.5 million fine on a supplier for its misleading sales and marketing practices, but does PURA have sufficient enforcement authority and capacity to effectively police retail suppliers? Has Maryland experienced similar issues with retail suppliers? What lessons and experiences will you bring to PURA to address these issues?
8. By law, the Department of Public Health, DEEP, and PURA have jurisdiction over different aspects of regulating the state's water supply. How might this shared jurisdiction make it more difficult for PURA to regulate water companies or for the state to have a comprehensive water plan and policy? What would the pros and cons be of giving PURA greater oversight over municipal water systems?
9. Governor Lamont has [stated](#) that he wants to encourage the spread of 5G wireless networks in the state and PURA has ruled that it has jurisdiction over siting 5G 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 should PURA's process and criteria differ from those used by the Connecticut Siting Council? To what extent should PURA consider environmental factors, public opinions, and input from municipal leaders? Are there any changes to PURA's siting process and criteria that you hope to implement?

10. You recently held a position as vice president of external relations with the Energy Storage Association, a national trade association representing the energy storage industry. What drew you back to public service? When your term as a PURA commissioner ends, what do you hope to have accomplished?

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