



TESTIMONY OF
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Before the Energy & Technology Committee
February 27, 2020

RE: H.B. No. 5227, AN ACT CONCERNING DISTRIBUTED ENERGY RESOURCES SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS.

H.B. 5226, AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS.

S.B. 178, AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS.

S.B. 177, AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY CONSUMPTION DATA AND LABELING.

S.B. 179, AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONNECTICUT GREEN BANK.

My name is Vincent Pace. I am an Assistant General Counsel for Eversource Energy. I am offering Eversource's testimony on the above-referenced bills that have been raised for public hearing.

a. Background on Eversource.

Eversource transmits and delivers electricity to 1.2 million customers in 149 municipalities in Connecticut; provides natural gas to 229,000 customers in 73 towns in Connecticut; and our affiliate (Aquamion Water Company) provides water service to 197,000 customers in 52 towns in Connecticut.

Eversource harnesses the commitment of its approximately 8,000 employees across three states to build a single, united company around the mission of delivering reliable energy, natural gas and water service, and superior customer service. Approximately 50 percent of our employees are members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the Utility Workers Union of America or The United Steelworkers covered by collective bargaining agreements.¹ In addition to the employees we directly employ, the infrastructure and other programs we administer generate hundreds of additional Connecticut-based jobs for contractors and subcontractors, as well as substantial property tax revenues for the municipalities we serve.

b. H.B. 5227, Section 2 concerning Renewable Natural Gas.

Eversource **supports** Section 2 of H.B. 5227, which authorizes the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection ("DEEP") to conduct requests for proposals to potentially purchase from anaerobic digestion facilities their biogas derived from the decomposition of farm-generated organic waste or source-separated organic material ("Renewable Natural Gas"). The resulting Renewable Natural Gas would be used by the

¹ See Page 00026, Lines 16-19, dated May 28, 2019, available at https://www.eversource.com/content/docs/default-source/investors/nh-review-2019-policy-overview.pdf?sfvrsn=51e7d762_0

customers of our State's three natural gas utilities to heat their homes and businesses.

Eversource supports such efforts to encourage the use of Renewable Natural Gas to help achieve Connecticut's carbon reduction goals. Additionally, it is important to recognize that other states have recently encouraged the use of Renewable Natural Gas. For example, starting in 2018, consumers in Vermont have had the opportunity to purchase Renewable Natural Gas.² In 2019, a program was announced in Maine that seeks to offer Renewable Natural Gas to consumers as early as 2021.³ And in 2019, Oregon passed legislation that encourages Renewable Natural Gas.⁴

c. H.B. 5226, Electric Vehicle Owner's Right to Charge.

Eversource **supports** H.B. 5226 because it provides electric vehicle owners with a right to charge their vehicles when they reside in rental properties with a designated parking space, condominium associations, or homeowner associations. It also balances the valid interests of associations and landlords with the equally important interests of electric vehicle owners by allowing reasonable restrictions to be imposed on installations of charging equipment and preventing unreasonable restrictions from being imposed on such equipment. Providing consumers who reside in rental properties and associations with a right to charge their vehicles under the balanced terms and conditions in H.B. 5226 will facilitate Connecticut's ability to make continued progress towards its goal of increasing the use of electric vehicles and reducing carbon emissions from the transportation sector. Eversource looks forward to collaborating with PURA, DEEP and other stakeholders to implement other initiatives that will increase electric vehicle adoption and reduce transportation emissions.

d. S.B. 178, Updated Energy Efficiency Standards for Appliances.

Eversource **supports** S.B. 178 because it updates energy and water efficiency standards for common household and commercial appliances. Updating energy and water efficiency standards is a critically important tool that enables consumers to reduce their consumption, achieve savings on their utility bills, and facilitates Connecticut's goal to continue to be a nationally recognized leader in promoting efficiency and conservation initiatives.

e. S.B. 177, Expanded Reporting of Energy Consumption Data And Labeling.

Eversource supports initiatives that provide consumers with access to energy consumption levels to enable them to make more informed energy-related decisions. We also support initiatives that promote energy efficiency in the building sector. For these reasons, Eversource supports S.B. 177's intent to further these

² See Jonathan Mingle, ENERGY NEWS NETWORK, *Vermont Gas Sees Growing Demand And Potential For Renewable Natural Gas*, (Nov. 19, 2019) (stating "In early 2018, Vermont Gas became the first local gas distribution company in the country to give customers the option to purchase renewable natural gas."), available at: <https://energynews.us/2019/11/19/northeast/vermont-gas-sees-growing-demand-and-potential-for-renewable-natural-gas/>

³ See BIOMASS MAGAZINE, *Maine utility announces RNG initiative* (May 30, 2019), (stating "Summit Utilities Inc., the parent company of Summit Natural Gas of Maine Inc., announced May 23 a new renewable natural gas (RNG) program aimed at supporting the local economy and fighting climate change.") available at: <http://biomassmagazine.com/articles/16203/maine-utility-announces-rng-initiative>

⁴ See, e.g., THE NATIONAL LAW REVIEW, *Oregon Adopts Renewable Natural Gas Portfolio Standards* (Sep. 23, 2019) (stating "The new statute creates increasing targets for the use of renewable natural gas in Oregon, moving in steps from 5% in 2020-24 to 30% by 2045-50."), available at: <https://www.natlawrview.com/article/oregon-adopts-renewable-natural-gas-portfolio-standards>

important goals. However, we respectfully request that S.B. 177 be amended to explain that, prior to implementation, PURA must review and approve a proposal from each electric distribution company (“EDC”) to implement the expanded data reporting required by S.B. 177. This approach will ensure that an expert agency will: (i) evaluate each EDC’s proposed data collection, control and reporting processes to adequately protect data privacy and security, (ii) review each EDC’s implementation procedures for the other elements of this program, and (iii) authorize recovery in electric rates by EDCs of only prudently incurred I.T. costs to effectuate the implementation of this program.

f. S.B. 179, Connecticut Green Bank.

Eversource supports the goals and mission of the Connecticut Green Bank to advance renewables through innovative financing approaches. We request, however, that clarifying language be added to S.B. 179 that explicitly states “nothing in this section designates the Connecticut Green Bank as a utility provider or public service company in the State of Connecticut” to clarify that this bill does not convert the Green Bank into a utility company. This clarifying change avoids any confusion about the purpose of this bill. With that clarifying change, Eversource supports S.B. 179.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

