Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Katie S. Dykes

**House Bill 5227 – An Act Concerning Distributed Energy Resources System Improvements**

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding House Bill 5227– An Act Concerning Distributed Energy Resources System Improvements. The purpose of this bill is to:

1. Amend existing authority for grid-side system enhancements pilot projects to allow the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) to do joint or concurrent review, as opposed to only sequentially; and
2. Allow DEEP to solicit proposals for the supply of biogas for injection into the natural gas distribution systems in the state from permitted anaerobic digestion facilities that produce biogas derived from the decomposition of farm-generated organic waste or source-separated organic material. DEEP supports the concepts raised by this bill only if changes are made to the language, as discussed below.

**Grid-Side System Enhancements**

Grid-side system enhancements are technologies and systems on the electric distribution system that can better enable the deployment of distributed energy resources. DEEP has used this authority to approve pilot projects from the state’s electric distribution companies (EDCs), including:

1. Systems to improve management of interconnection applications;
2. Hosting capacity maps to identify the maximum amount of distributed energy resources individual circuits can accommodate through a visual mapping tool;
3. Improved load forecasts based on distributed generation projections; and
4. Targeted distributed energy resources at specific substations to provide local distribution system benefits.

This bill would allow for flexibility in the review process for this existing authority and allow DEEP and PURA to coordinate review of complex proposals. While DEEP is supportive of this concept, DEEP and PURA had developed consensus language for this bill that was not reflected in this proposed draft. DEEP’s support of this bill is contingent on developing language that addresses DEEP’s and PURA’s respective concerns in this regard.

**Biogas Procurement**

Biogas is a type of biofuel that is naturally produced from the decomposition of organic waste. DEEP generally supports this provision because anaerobic digestion is an important component to meeting the goals articulated in the Comprehensive Materials Management Strategy developed pursuant to section 22a-228 of the general statutes. In addition, DEEP supports ensuring that any biogas injected into the natural gas distribution system is done so in a safe manner. Of note, the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) initiated a docket, as required by Section 18 of Public Act 19-35, to define and adopt gas quality interconnection standards for biogas suitable for injection into the gas distribution system. This proceeding can help ensure biogas generated by anaerobic digestion is safely utilized when injected into the natural gas distribution system.
As noted for Section 1, DEEP and PURA collaborated on language for Section 2 of this bill that is not reflected in the current draft. DEEP’s support for this portion of the bill is also contingent on the development of language that addresses DEEP’s and PURA’s concerns.

We welcome the opportunity to work with the committee to address the specific aspects of the bill noted above. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mandi Careathers, the Department’s legislative liaison, at Mandi.Careathers@ct.gov.