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Energy and Technology Committee

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Testimony in support of H.B. 6525: An Act Establishing A Task Force To Study Electric Distribution Companies

Co-Chairs Senator Needleman, and Representative Arconti, Ranking Members Senator Formica, Representative Ferraro, and distinguished members of the Energy and Technology Committee: Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in support of **H.B. 6525: An Act Establishing A Task Force To Study Electric Distribution Companies**.

The last twelve months have been a very trying time psychologically, physically and economically with the COVID-19 restrictions/quarantines, which has led to massive unemployment and severe economic hardships for thousands in my district. During all these hardships, Eversource took the irresponsible act of imposing rate hikes on my constituents, that include thousands of hardworking families, struggling small business owners, farmers and senior citizens on fixed incomes. Connecticut already has some of the highest electric rates in the country and the attempts from Eversource will make it even more expensive. This will lead to even a greater exodus of families, businesses and seniors alike. To boot, during the attempted electric distribution rate hike from Eversource during a time of mass financial hardships, they left many in my district and throughout the state without power for as long as two weeks in the wake of Tropical Storm Isaias.

Clearly, the time is long overdue to aggressively explore breaking up monopolies like Eversource in Connecticut and providing the ratepayers options that are much fairer and more equitable. In contrast to Eversource, with municipal electric companies like Norwich and Jewett City performing well in the restoration response times, I propose specific language be inserted in this bill to charge the taskforce to examine the feasibility of municipal electric companies expanding their service areas and the costs associated with acquiring the infrastructure including, but not limited to, utility poles and wires.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony and I strongly encourage the Energy and Technology Committee to act quickly and favorably on H.B. 6225: An Act Establishing A Task Force To Study Electric Distribution Companies.