



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 78**

January Session, 2021

Senate Bill No. 855

*Senate, March 17, 2021*

The Committee on Energy and Technology reported through SEN. NEEDLEMAN of the 33rd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT CONCERNING THE DECOUPLING OF THE PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY AND THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) Not later than October 1,  
2 2021, the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection shall  
3 begin the decoupling process of the Public Utilities Regulatory  
4 Authority and the Department of Energy and Environmental  
5 Protection.

6 (b) Not later than January 1, 2022, the Commissioner of Energy and  
7 Environmental Protection shall submit a report, and any  
8 recommendations for legislation, detailing an implementation plan for  
9 such decoupling and any progress made to date on such decoupling to  
10 the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having  
11 cognizance of matters relating to energy, in accordance with the  
12 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section

**ET**      *Joint Favorable*

*The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.*

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 22 \$	FY 23 \$
Public Utility Control, Dept.	CC&PUCF - Cost	None	Up to \$750,000

Note: CC&PUCF=Consumer Counsel and Public Utility Control Fund

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

The bill requires that the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) develop and implement a plan to decouple from the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA), beginning no later than October 1 and implementing the plan thereafter. There are anticipated personnel costs related to the hiring of fiscal administration staff as a result of the separation. Based on the deadlines outlined in the bill, it is not anticipated that the decoupling of these entities would incur costs until FY 23.

Currently, DEEP provides fiscal administration services for PURA. It is anticipated that decoupling from DEEP would require PURA to hire 5 fiscal-related employees at an annual cost of \$746,960 for salary and fringe benefits.<sup>1</sup>

**The Out Years**

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

<sup>1</sup> The fringe benefit costs for employees funded out of other appropriated funds are budgeted within the fringe benefit account of those funds, as opposed to the fringe benefit accounts within the Office of the State Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes for other appropriated fund employees is 95.57% of payroll in FY 22 and FY 23

**OLR Bill Analysis****SB 855*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE DECOUPLING OF THE PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY AND THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.*****SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) commissioner to begin decoupling the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) and DEEP by October 1, 2021. By January 1, 2022, the commissioner must submit to the Energy and Technology Committee a report that includes an implementation plan for the decoupling, any progress made toward decoupling, and any recommendations for legislation.

PURA is within DEEP by law, and the PURA chairperson needs the DEEP commissioner's approval to, among other things, conduct comprehensive planning for PURA and organize the authority into divisions, bureaus, or other units (CGS § 16-2). Additionally, the law makes the commissioner a party in every PURA proceeding and allows her to participate in proceedings at her discretion (CGS § 16-9b).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Energy and Technology Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 24 Nay 2 (03/02/2021)