

## Legislative History for Connecticut Act

### SA 19-15

#### SB469

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will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally  
please.

Will the Clerk will please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill No. 7192 as Amended by House "A"

Total Number Voting	146
Necessary for Passage	74
Those voting Yea	140
Those voting Nay	6
Absent not voting	5

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE (48TH):

The Bill as amended passes [Gavel]. Will the  
Clerk please call Calendar No. 690?

CLERK:

On Page 49, Calendar 690, Senate Bill No. 469

AN ACT REQUIRING THE PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY  
AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND  
MINIMUM STAFFING AND EQUIPMENT LEVELS FOR ELECTRIC  
DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES. Favorable Report of the  
Joint Standing Committee on Energy and Technology.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE (48TH):

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Representative Arconti. You have the floor,  
sir.

REP. ARCONTI (109TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker I move  
for Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable  
Report and Passage of the Bill in concurrence with  
the Senate.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE (48TH):

The Question before the Chamber is Acceptance  
of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and  
Passage of the Bill in concurrence with the Senate.  
Representative Arconti.

REP. ARCONTI (109TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker the  
Clerk is in possession of Amendment LCO 9084. I  
would ask the Clerk to please call the Amendment and  
that I be granted leave of the Chamber to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE (48TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO No. 9084  
previously designated a Senate Amendment Schedule  
"A".

CLERK:

Senate Amendment Schedule "A" LCO No. 9084  
offered by Senator Needleman.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE (48TH):

The Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize, is there objection? Is there objection to summarization? Seeing none, Representative Arconti.

REP. ARCONTI (109TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker this Amendment changes the Bill into a study. It requires the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority to study industry specific standards for acceptable performance by an electric distribution company and minimum staffing and equipment levels for each electric distribution company that operates in the State and I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE (48TH):

Thank you, Senator. Will you care to remark on Senate Amendment Schedule "A"? Senate Amendment Schedule "A". Representative Ferraro, my good

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friend that represents West Haven.

REP. FERRARO (117TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is always great to see you up there, especially this evening. I rise in support of the Amendment for the reasons that the good Chair has spoken. This study will help to determine whether or not staffing numbers are adequate to be able to handle some of the emergencies that our electric companies face.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

I urge all my colleagues to support the Amendment. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE (48TH):

Thank you, Sir. Let me try your minds. All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE (48TH):

All those opposed, nay. The aye's have it [Gavel] the Amendment is adopted. Will you care to remark further on the Bill as amended? Will you

care to remark further on the Bill as amended? If not Staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Members take your seats; the machine will be open. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll,  
Members to the Chamber. The House of  
Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the  
Chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE (48TH):

Have all members voted? Have all the members  
voted? Please check the board to determine if your  
vote has been properly cast. If so, the machine  
will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

And will the Clerk please announce the tally.

CLERK:

Senate Bill No. 469 as Amended by Senate "A" in  
concurrence with the Senate.

Total Number Voting	146
Necessary for Passage	74
Those voting Yea	139

sp  
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Those voting Nay 7

Absent not voting 5

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE (48TH):

The Bill as amended is passes in concurrence  
with the Senate [Gavel]. Representative Matthew  
Ritter, you have the floor, sir.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Thank you for the full name. Delis is the  
middle name if you want to do the full next time,  
madam.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE (48TH):

Matthew Dallas Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

It's not Dallas. It's Delis. Dallas is a city  
in Texas. So just a reminder and having talked to  
the Minority Leader, do to what restraints on what  
we are able to do in terms of Consent Calendar,  
there may not be one tonight. So every time you  
leave and don't vote, it is more things we can't get  
to. So really try to sit tight please and be ready  
to vote as soon as possible. Thank you, Madam



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THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Slap. Will you remark further on the Bill? Senator Flexer.

SENATOR FLEXER (29TH):

Madam President, if there's no objection I move we place this Bill on our Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered. Will the Clerk please return to the call?

CLERK:

Page 5, Calendar No. 114 Senate Bill 469, AN ACT  
REQUIRING THE PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY  
TO ESTABLISH PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND MINIMUM  
STAFFING AND EQUIPMENT LEVELS FOR ELECTRIC  
DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Witkos, for what purpose do you rise, sir?

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Pursuant to Rule 15 for a potential conflict of interest, I ask for recusal from the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

So noted. Thank you, Senator. Senator Kissel.

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SENATOR KISSEL (7TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Great to see you there this afternoon.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

SENATOR KISSEL (7TH):

I also rise under Rule 15 for recusal, to avoid a possible potential conflict of interest.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. So noted.

SENATOR KISSEL (7TH):

Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Logan.

SENATOR LOGAN (17TH):

Madam President, pursuant to Rule 15, I wish to recuse myself from debate and consideration of this Bill.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. So noted, Senator Logan. And if we have tended to that business, Senator Needleman, you have the floor.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD):

Thank you, Madam President. Very nice to see you up there. I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report on passage of the Bill.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is acceptance and passage. Will you remark, Senator?

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD):

So, Madam President, the Clerk is possession of an Amendment, LCO 9084. I would ask that the Clerk please call the Amendment.

THE CHAIR:

The Clerk is possession of an Amendment. Will the Clerk please call?

CLERK:

LCO 9084, Senate Schedule "A".

THE CHAIR:

Senator Needleman, you have the floor, sir.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD):

Yeah. Thank you, Madam President. So, this Bill is a request to do a study on staffing levels for -- move the Amendment -- sorry.

THE CHAIR:

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Motion is adoption, sir.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD):

Motion to adopt the Amendment. Sorry.

THE CHAIR:

So -- so noted. Motion is adoption. Proceed.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD):

Thank you, Madam President. This Bill is about staffing levels for Eversource in doing a study to make sure that they have adequate staffing in case of storms and can manage the amount of infrastructure. I'd just like to speak to the fact that I have been a First Selectman for a while, a Selectman for a while, and a large customer of the utility, and found that, in many cases, their performance was substandard, found that they did not have adequate in-house staff to manage serious events and relied too much on contractors and out-of-state -- out-of-state mutual aid.

I just think that it's time that we study the impact of the change in their staffing in both energy distribution companies to make sure that they are hiring enough people and have adequate staff to do the job that they're richly paid to do in the state of Connecticut.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Amendment? Senator Formica, you have the floor.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Good afternoon.

THE CHAIR:

And good afternoon, sir.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

I rise for a few comments.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I, too, served as a First Selectman during a -- a couple of those major hurricanes and had many concerns with the -- with the results of restoring and keeping electricity moving during those -- during those storms and during the aftermath of those storms. This Amendment would seek to look at an industrywide situation and have a study to figure out the more specific and acceptable standard performances for the electric companies, not only in terms of staffing, but in terms of equipment that they must have, and it would customize their particular needs for the state of Connecticut.

As the good Senator mentioned, there are often times when storms come up the east coast or they travel from west to east, staffing is deployed from state to state. And often times, it gets caught in the storm's fury, if you will, and are -- are -- and are

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unable to -- to get to the state, you know, in a timely fashion.

So, I think this is a good study to get going and see where we're -- where we need to end up so that we can move acceptable standards and keep our electricity running for the people here in the state of Connecticut. So I urge adoption. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the Amendment? If not, I will try your minds. All those in favor please indicate by saying aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed. The ayes have it. The Amendment is adopted. [Gavel] Will you remark further on the Bill as now amended? Senator Needleman.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD):

I'd like to move to put this on --

THE CHAIR:

Oh -- excuse me, Senator Somers.

SENATOR SOMERS (18TH)

Madam President, the Clerk is in possession of LCO No. 9792, and I would ask that he call that Amendment please.

THE CHAIR:

Clerk is in possession of LCO 9792. If the Clerk would please call?

CLERK:

LCO 9792, Senate Schedule "B".

THE CHAIR:

Senator Somers, you have the floor.

SENATOR SOMERS (18TH):

Yes. I asked that I move the reading and seek to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

And the question is adoption, Madam. You move adoption?

SENATOR SOMERS (18TH):

Yes, I move adoption of the Amendment. And this Amendment has to do with utility companies. And this Amendment is something that I would like to be added to this Bill which has to do with our Municipal Electric Cooperatives called CMEEC. And as many of you may recall, this was a Bill that we dealt with in the last session having to do with a Municipal Electric Energy Cooperative that was



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originally setup with seven of the most distressed communities to provide the lowest power cost to these communities. And what we had found, between last year and today, is that our Bill that we passed previously which required forensic audits of activity, etcetera has resulted in five FBI indictments with charges ranging anywhere from 50 to 100 years in prison.

And this Amendment seeks that, should those folks who are part of a quasi-public organization that was established by this legislature in Section 7 of the statutes which falls under municipalities, that if they are found guilty of these crimes, that they would be required to repay the charges that are accumulating and being paid right now by the rate payers of those municipalities.

The estimated legal fees are upwards of \$800 thousand dollars to date. And again, these are being paid with rate payer dollars. And I ask that people support this Amendment because this, again, was setup as a cooperative in the '70s to provide the lowest power cost for seven most distressed communities, and they have lost their way. They were using rate payer money to go on junkets that I'm sure we've all heard about, the Kentucky Derby, and it only -- is only suiting that, if they're found guilty, they should repay the rate payers. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Somers. Will you remark further? Senator Formica, you have the floor, sir.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I rise for a few comments on the Amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. The intent of this legislation, as the good Senator indicated, is just to ensure that the legal fees are returned, should convictions appear, which would, in fact, codify the bylaws of CMEEC. So, we just -- the Amendment just seeks to make sure that should bylaws be changed, that this provision remains intact and those that are subject to the indictment and -- would have to -- would have to be responsible for their legal -- legal fees. So, I urge adoption. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Amendment? Will you remark further on the Amendment? Senator Needleman, you have the --

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD):

Yeah. Thank you --

THE CHAIR:

-- floor.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD):

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-- Madam President. I rise in opposition to the Amendment. I'd like to call a Roll Call Vote.

THE CHAIR:

A Roll Call Vote has been requested and at the time of vote, we will be voting by roll call. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? If not, will the Clerk please announce a pendency of a Roll Call Vote?

CLERK:

Immediate Roll Call Vote has been ordered in the Senate. Immediate Roll Call Vote has been ordered in the Senate. Immediate Roll Call Vote has been ordered in the Senate. Immediate Roll Call Vote has been -- Immediate Roll Call Vote has been ordered in the Senate on Senate Amendment "B".

THE CHAIR:

Please check the Roll Call Vote to see if your vote is properly recorded. Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? If so, the machine will be closed and the Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

Senate Bill 469, Senate Amendment "B", LCO 9792.

Total number voting	32
Those voting Yea	11
Those voting Nay	21
Absent and not voting	4

THE CHAIR:

Amendment fails. [Gavel] Senator Needleman.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD):

Thank you, Madam President. I move that we put the  
Amendment on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

The request is to place the -- the Bill on the  
Consent Calendar.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD):

[inaudible - 01:11:47].

THE CHAIR:

I think we will have a Roll Call Vote if --

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD):

No, I -- I'm sorry. I've been told, we have to do a  
Roll Call Vote.

THE CHAIR:

Yeah.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD):

Sorry about that.

THE CHAIR:

I thought so. [laughter] If -- Senator Duff.

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SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Yes, we do need to have a Roll Call Vote on this Bill. Before we get to that, I just want to ensure that there's nobody else who wanted to speak on the -- on the Bill before us? Okay.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Let's have a vote.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no further remarks, will the Clerk please announce a pendency of a Roll Call Vote? Thank you.

CLERK:

Immediate Roll Call Vote has been ordered in the Senate. Immediate Roll Call Vote has been ordered in the Senate on Senate Bill 469 as amended by Senate "A". Immediate Roll Call Vote has been ordered in the Senate, Senate Bill 469 as amended by Senate "A". Immediate Roll Call Vote in the Senate. Immediate Roll Call Vote has been ordered in the Senate on 469 -- Senate Bill 469 as amended by Senate "A". Immediate Roll Call Vote has been ordered in the Senate on Senate Bill 469 as amended by Senate "A".

THE CHAIR:

Have all the members voted? Please check the roll call machine to see that your vote has properly cast. And if so, the machine will be closed and the Clerk will please announce the tally.

CLERK:

SB 469

Senate Bill 4569, as amended by Senate "A".

Total number voting	32
Those voting Yea	32
Those voting Nay	0
Absent and not voting	4

THE CHAIR:

Bill as amended is passed. [Gavel] Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, the next item, Calendar page 9, Calendar 188, Senate Bill 960, I'd like to mark that item PT, and have the Clerk call the next Bill on the agenda. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir. Will the Clerk please return to the call?

CLERK:

Page 21, Calendar No. 352, Substitute for Senate Bill No. 1010, AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISCLOSURE OF DAMS AND SIMILAR STRUCTURES BY OWNERS OF REAL PROPERTY.

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winter period so we believe that bill could be very damaging.

And the last bill I'm going to comment on is House Bill 5002, the development of a Green New Deal. I was personally on the Governor's Transition Team, participated in the development of this. Our parent company, Avangrid, is one of the largest owners of wind resources in the nation. We've got a good record at UI of owning solar panels, fuel cells. We're very proud of our energy efficiency programs which are among the best in the nation. We've got a lot of provisions to help customers and there's a lot of great ideas around the New Green Economy. My caution to the committee would be that it's very important, it was part of that deliberation also included concerns about cost of ratepayers. We're a very high cost state in Connecticut and so I think it's very important that we resist the temptation to buy it all and we balance the cost of various technologies against other technologies and pick the ones that provide the most benefit to the residents of Connecticut. With that, I'll turn it over to Mr. Eves who's going to talk about Senate Bill 469.

CHARLES EVES: Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Proposed Bill 469 that proposes to amend state statutes to address utility response times for restoration and to establish minimum staffing levels. Our focus at UI is to meet the needs of our customers in a cost-effective way. The company maintains a 12-month rolling work plan that we update monthly and we adjust our resources to meet the needs of that work plan. That allows us to cost effectively get the work done we need to, to maintain the system. It also allows us to respond to the smaller and medium-sized events. For large



storms, the company leverages our employees, contractors and our affiliate facilities as part of the Avangrid Family, Rochester Gas and Electric, NYSEG, Central Main Power to leverage those resources as well as the mutual assistance groups that we belong to. During a large scale event, we'll scale our resources 5-10 times what we typically have on a given day and work basically a double shift to provide the resources necessary to get the word done. There are two ways to shorten the duration of outages for customers. There's bringing the right resources to bear on the problem once it occurs, and the second is to reduce the damage the storms cause in the first place. Typically, in our territory, what causes the damage is trees so we've been executing a 12-year program. We're a few years into that to remove the trees and limbs that overhang our facilities. We believe that's an effective way to minimize the impact of the storms and to restore power more quickly to our customers.

We believe the current process to scale our day-to-day resources to meet the day-to-day work and the process we execute to bring resources to bear on storms is the most cost effective means for customers and is in their best long-term interest. Thank you.

PAT MCDONNELL: And Mr. Robie's gonna comment on House Bill 5580.

ERIK ROBIE: So thank you Senators, Representatives and Members of the Committee. House Bill 5580, AN ACT REQUIRING ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES TO OFFER CERTAIN INFRASTRUCTURE (streetlights) FOR SALE TO CERTAIN MUNICIPALITIES. UIL respectfully

PAT MCDONNEL: Thank you. We'd be happy to answer questions about those bills or any other questions you may have today.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): Thank you.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for coming here today. With regard to Proposed Bill 469, how do you typically determine staffing levels?

CHARLES EVES: Staffing levels are determined based upon looking at our work plan. So we typically staff our internal work force to deal with the recurring work and then we'll leverage contractors to hit the peaks of work. In general, we want our people to get a flavor of all the different types of work they could encounter in a storm so we try to make sure that they have the skills necessary to deal with anything they could come upon in a storm event.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH): So if you could describe to me the process that you go through when looking at a proposed event that's going to have a severe impact on the power grid and your effort ramping up. I'd just be, I'd like to hear how that process plays out, please.

CHARLES EVES: So we'll look at the predicted impact of where it's going to occur first to understand how we can leverage our affiliate resources from the different companies. If it's gonna impact a small area, we'll leverage those resources to come to our aid. We will also leverage contractors that are in the market. There are certain contractor companies that specialize in doing work for storms. We'll also leverage mutual assistance. Now typically,

mutual assistance is other utilities that may need to ensure that their constituency is taken care of and typically, they will come to our aid after the damage has occurred, but we will use that suite of resources to build the resources we need to execute the work as quickly as we can.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH): And how do you prioritize the process going forward?

CHARLES EVES: So PURA requires us to submit an Emergency Preparedness Plan and in that plan, it defines the different priorities that we leverage. Public safety is number one. We work with our towns to define municipal priorities. We try to restore those municipal priorities first. In some cases, they're not convenient to restore. You need to go far into the circuit to restore those so it can take us some time and produce a plateau in the restoration curve. From there, we go after the largest outages to the smallest outages in general.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH): And how often do you reassess, I mean does PURA require you every so often to go through, update that plan? I'm just curious as to the process. Obviously, you learn from events as they play out and this would've worked better, we should've staged there, I mean obviously you have 100 plus years of experience, but I'm just curious. Once things have happened, how do you then go back and improve the process?

CHARLES EVES: So we do an after-action review after every event that occur within our operations team and our company. There is a periodic refresh of the Emergency Preparedness Plan. As I sit here right now, I can't recall the exact periodicity. I think

it's every two years that we would be subject to check.

PAT MCDONNELL: That's correct, yeah.

CHARLES EVES: But we're in a constant state of evaluating that plan and really, I mean lately, in a constant state of executing it. There's a wind storm predicted for this weekend that we're preparing for as we speak.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH): And what resources do you use to determine what are likely to be events going forward? I know UConn has done a lot in terms of prediction, but what do you have at your disposal to help you prepare for these events?

CHARLES EVES: We subscribe to multiple weather services and prediction algorithms to try to get as much data as we can. UConn is one of them. Western Connecticut State University is another. There are some commercial tools that we use as well , Atmos and DTN so we get both weather forecasts from them and the National Weather Service as well as damage prediction models and we take those things into account and the experience of our people. They're not perfect, you know the prediction models. They provide an analytic basis and they provide good information, but we leverage the experience of our people as well and can try to anticipate what is coming and be prepared. We understand two things. You know as we move forward, people are more and more reliant on the power system. We need to get that restored very quickly and the second thing we need to do is communicate every step of the way. Communicate before the event occurs, communicate during it, provide what we know to our constituents

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and our customers as we know it and update it as things change.

REP. CHEESEMAM (37TH): All right. Thank you for your answers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): Thank you.  
Representative Gresko?

REP. GRESKO (121ST): Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for the lighting upgrades in the UI distribution area in Stratford but I noticed that the utility poles are now higher up off the ground, higher. I'm wondering if it's because of the anticipated future need for space on the utility poles as we vault into the 20-something century. Is that reason?

CHARLES EVES: It's a combination of current needs and that anticipation, yes. It's also so we maintain the NASC clearances that we require between communication gains and our facility.

REP. GRESKO (121ST): Okay. So that was you that did the utility poles? Uh, the new ones?

ERIK ROBIE: We have a joint partnership with the telephone in our area, Frontier, so I think it's about a 60:40 ratio.

REP. GRESKO (121ST): So if you've priced the upgrade that you did for lighting and the utility poles and factoring in you wouldn't have to pay taxes on this anymore to the municipality, it still doesn't work for you numbers-wise going forward as far as potentially selling some of those?

ERIK ROBIE: So it's not the, it's not the upfront cost and the savings that are the problem. It's the long-term impact that we see from the municipalities that have purchased their lights. They now have to

absorb a significant cost so they'll be losing the tax revenue from this but we'll be spreading, our asset base will be diminished so we will have increased O&M cost for those lights that are still retaining in our service territory so the per-light basis, on a per-light basis, the O&M cost goes significantly higher so we still have to maintain the infrastructure for those towns that choose not to purchase their, their lights. For the municipalities themselves, it may be an upfront savings, but long term, we see that those municipalities are gonna incur significant costs. They have administrative fees, they have audit fees, they have, they need to respond when poles are hit from accidents or weather events and they have to continuously have staff to maintain those, those assets.

REP. GRESKO (121ST): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): Anybody else? So I have a couple of questions. First of all, when you did your lighting upgrade, did you, did you notify your towns ahead of time?

ERIK ROBIE: We did. We actually worked with all the municipal officials and notified them and worked in partnership with them to coordinate and even down to traffic control with the towns, and we accelerated the programs based on the cooperation that we got from the municipal officials.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): Did any of them have any, did they have like any visibility into the lights you chose and the way they worked?

ERIK ROBIE: The actual physical light itself, no, we provided standards that we had and we allowed them

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BB

ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY

10:00 a.m.

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to choose the wattages and the color temperature that they chose. So they changed up some of the lights in their based on for example high crime areas, they would go with a brighter light and that was based on cooperation with the municipal officials as well as the first responders and the police departments.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): So did you receive a lot of complaints from individual residents about the fact that the lights themselves were, that they appear to be dramatically different? I don't know about yours, that's why I'm asking, they appear to be dramatically different visually. If you look up at them or if you happen to live adjacent to one of them?

ERIK ROBIE: I don't know the volume of complaints we received. We received, relative to the number of lights that were out there, was actually very modest. The, probably the primary complaint would be where the light was shining and we would then dispatch somebody to put a shield on it to reflect the light in a different direction. So that was the primary reason. The other complaint that we would receive is that the lights, the LED lights are more focused in where they don't have a lot of light pollution where it spreads further, so there were actually requests for additional lights because it didn't, it didn't spread as far like in a crosswalk area.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): So when you did them, did you anticipate that you'd have some issues with individual residents and did you have shields ahead of time?

ERIK ROBIE: We did. We did have shields ahead of time and we still maintain inventory of those. We did anticipate that we would have some issues based on the color temperature difference. They are noticeably different, but again, we tried to reach out to the municipalities beforehand and work with them as lessons learned, and as we approached new towns, we took those lessons learned to meet with the municipal officials as well to say what might be coming.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): What'd you go from high-pressure sodium to LED?

ERIK ROBIE: We did.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): And generally speaking, have you seen the brightness diminish? How far, how far out from the installation are you now?

ERIK ROBIE: I'm sorry?

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): I mean how many, how far along?

ERIK ROBIE: So we are through 15 of the 16 towns that we, that we have, that we own lights in so we are almost done with all of our lights.

PAT MCDONNELL: I think the answer to your question, Senator, I think Stratford, Representative Gresko's town was one of the first I think in either 2014 or 2015 and I've not seen the lights in front of my house change at all.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): Because high-pressure sodium and some of the other lights actually do sort of, they start out at one brightness, they end up at another and just as a question, what was the



temperature of the high-pressure sodium versus these?

ERIK ROBIE: I don't know that off the top of my head. I know the temperature is, we offer 3000 or 4000 for the LED lights. I'm not sure what the equivalent high-pressure sodium is.

PAT MCDONNELL: And I think the high-pressure sodium I think is around 2700.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): Okay, so it's a little bit more yellow and you've gone to more white light, but it shouldn't be that noticeable.

PAT MCDONNELL: Right.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): I had a reason for asking all those questions. I'm assuming that you've had a relatively successful rollout with them?

ERIK ROBIE: Uh, yes, we had, I think if you ask our municipal partners as well they would think it was a successful rollout and we were able to accelerate it based on again, working with those municipal officials.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): So to me as a municipal CEO, not being surprised is a big thing, working collaboratively and not just having all of a sudden all new lights show up and then getting the complaints so I commend you on doing that. I just want to ask you a couple of other questions on the other topic. I'm the one who put in the bill about the minimum staffing for line people and that was also quite deliberate.

I don't know what your total workforce is and I don't know 20 years ago versus today, what's the difference in the level of your on-the-ground line

people, staffing. Has it changed dramatically?  
Have you reduced or stayed flat or increased or?

CHARLES EVES: It has not changed dramatically.  
We've been around 100 linemen at UI. We're actually planning a line school and have just posted positions for that next year and we maintain a variable force of line contractors at UI anywhere between 30 and 70 or 80 line contractors depending upon the projects that we have underway at any given time so in general, at UI that number has stayed around the same number. With internal employees, it fluctuates based upon the workload externally.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): How long does it take from the point that you hire somebody to the point that they can actually work on their own?

ERIK ROBIE: They can work on their own at certain tasks. It takes 4-1/2 to 5 years for them to really be proficient at a level that you'd be comfortable with them virtually doing anything on their own, to become a journeyman lineman.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): Thank you. Okay and one other question. I have not read your emergency ops plan. I've read Eversource's. What is your make safe? What is your allowable time to make safe?

CHARLES EVES: The allowable time to make safe? I'm not sure that that is specifically defined or it's variable depending upon the scale of the event. Obviously public safety is one of our number one concerns. We deploy resources to, to deal with the, with the wires down. During the storm, we also deploy resources to watch over them. You know as we get reports of them, we'll send people into the field to ensure that they're guarded and we'll

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deploy the resources to then go around and remove them. It's an exercise in work management of the resources that we have to deploy at the time. In a large storm when we have many resources, that would be a priority and there would be many resources deployed. It depends on the situation.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): Do you concurrently do restoration as you're doing make safe?

CHARLES EVES: Correct and one of the things we've employed is to provide, if the EOC and the town is open, we provide a make safe crew to work with that town's EOC to direct them to their priorities.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): So you'll dedicate a crew to each town ahead of the storm or at the beginning of the storm?

CHARLES EVES: We'll make that contact and if their EOC is open, we will provide that, that crew.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): All right. I thank you. Appreciate the time.

PAT MCDONNELL: Thank you.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD):

ELIAS PETERSEN: Good afternoon Chairman Needleman, Chairman Arconti, members of the Committee. My name is Elias Petersen and I'm an attorney with Kolmar Americas and I'm here today representing Kolmar and its subsidiary, American GreenFuels. We are here in support of House Bill 5380.

A little bit about American GreenFuels. We are New England's largest biodiesel producer. We're located at the Port of New Haven here in Connecticut. We have a name plate capacity of 40 million gallons

VINCENT PACE: Good afternoon, Chairman Needleman, Vice-Chairman Fonfara and Chairman Arconti and member of the committee. My name is Vincent Pace. I am Associate General Counsel for Eversource Energy and I handle regulatory matters for the State of Connecticut. It's a pleasure to be here today in front of you. I'm also joined today by Michael Hayhurst. He's our Vice-President of Electric System Operations and Eversource submitted detailed comments on ten bills, but out of respect for your time and to avoid repeating comments raised by others, we will limit our comments today to one bill, that's Senate Bill 469, AN ACT CONCERNING UTILITY RESPONSE TIMES FOR RESTORATION OF ELECTRIC SERVICE AND UTILITY MINIMUM STAFFING LEVELS. Mr. Hayhurst will not provide Eversource's comments. Thank you.

MICHAEL HAYHURST: Good afternoon members of the committee. Just as a little background, my current responsibilities include overseeing the day-to-day operation of the transmission and distribution system in Connecticut for electricity only. I also plan for and respond to all the storms that impact our Connecticut customers. During these storm events, I am the Incident Commander for the State of Connecticut directly leading our efforts to restore power to our customers. Regarding Senate Bill 469 which as you know proposes to amend the Connecticut General Statutes to address utility response times for restoration of electric service and to establish minimum staffing levels for utility line crews. Eversource does not support SB 469 because Public Utilities Regulatory Authority already has the necessary authority to regulate these two important issues. More importantly, PURA has already

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exercised, and continues to exercise, significant day-to-day oversight over these two areas. Connecticut General Statute requires Eversource and other utility companies to file an emergency response plan which was mentioned in earlier testimony. We do this with PURA every two years and it authorizes PURA to initiate dockets to evaluate those plans. That statute also requires each utility company's ERP filed with PURA to explain how it will prepare for and respond to different levels of customer outages. In response to utility companies filing their ERPs every two years, PURA has initiated dockets to review their performance and the dockets are noted in the pre-filed testimony. As part of our emergency response plan, which is in the attachment, we have a matrix that shows that PURA has already provided Eversource with clear direction on typical staffing levels and restoration timelines for five different levels of storm events, and they're categorized by severity.

In addition, regarding staffing levels for storm restoration events, PURA carefully evaluates utility company staffing levels in rate cases that are initiated under Connecticut General Statute. In Eversource's most recent rate case in 2017 and 2018, PURA approved a plan in which Eversource will hire 100 new, incremental Connecticut utility workers over three years: 33 in 2018, 33 in 2019 and 34 in 2020. On January 31, 2019, Eversource informed PURA that Eversource surpassed its hiring goal of 33 utility workers for 2018 by hiring 57 workers in incremental last year.

Finally, regarding staffing levels for storm restoration events, we encourage the legislature to avoid passing any law that requires fixed, mandatory

in-house staffing levels because we have to balance the equally important goals of ensuring reliable electric service and reasonable restoration times following storm events, and maintaining reasonable electric rates for consumers and businesses. It would be too costly for customers to maintain year-round in-house staffing levels based on the level of work needed to respond to these catastrophic storms. Having sufficient in-house workers to perform the day-to-day work and supplementing them with contractors to repair storm damage and mutual aid, is a tried and true model used by other utilities throughout the nation. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony.

VINCENT PACE: And we'd be happy to answer any questions from any committee members.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): Right, thank you. Nice seeing you Mike.

MICHAEL HAYHURST: Senator.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): We have anybody else?

REP. MESKERS (150TH): I appreciate the commentary, thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the commentary related to staffing levels, I'm not sure what's been proposed or what your concern is there. It probably helps us in making our framework and decisions. It's in getting an estimate of what kind of additional costs the ratepayers are gonna bear for additional staffing, and I appreciate your trying to balance service and production costs so when we get to, you know these types of bills come in response to either a perceived problem or a complaint from the electorate, so if the electorate is willing to pay a

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couple cents more per kilowatt, I mean that's where we have to sit down and look at the balance between yourselves and PURA so it helps if we get any commentaries regarding to the perceived costs this would bring onboard.

MICHAEL HAYHURST: I'll speak to the operational needs of staffing and it was touched on by the UI Avangrad gentleman as well. You know we do have a work plan, a capital work plan and we also have operation and maintenance expenses and things that break that we have to fix. They're not just the major, major storms and we have staffing levels which are created to number one, execute our transmission and distribution capital work plan, and also respond to you know customer outages, new customer connects, engineering, reliability upgrades that are required to enhance the system or improve the system and then we have the major weather events.

You know when you look at our reliability numbers at CL&P over the last few years, reliability has just been a steady improvement over those years so in my opinion, that would testify that the model that we have regarding staffing and the blend of internal resources with some external resources has worked out well. When you look at the major events that we've had over the past 16 months, I was just testifying in front of PURA last week. We've had five catastrophic events since October 2017, yeah windstorm in October 2017, three northeasters in March 2018 back to back to back, and then the four tornadoes in May impacting almost a million customers and the restoration, the blend of internal and external resource, mutual aid, resources from our other Eversource sister companies, you know the

results were in my opinion spectacular on the restorations for those. There's obviously always some room for improvement. When you look at five major events and there really were not a lot of concerns expressed from the public as far as the restoration goes or from municipalities. We work with the municipalities that are hardest hit and we've had good luck with this formula and also just as important today is communicating with the customers during these events.

VINCENT PACE: And if I could also add in response to your question. You asked the question of the actual cost for the personnel. What I will say in the companies last rate case, it was Docket 17-10-46 filed in 2017, final decision on April 18, 2018, we actually project for the regulators the actual salary, benefits and overheads for each of those incremental employees so when we submitted our proposal to hire 100 utility workers over three years, we had to identify projected salary, benefits and overheads and we don't recover that in rates unless we show we actually hired these personnel, so Mr. Hayhurst reflected the fact that our goal for 2018 was 33 incremental employees. We exceeded that by 57. Only when we show proof we hired them do we actually recover the amounts and rates.

REP. MESKERS (150TH): And just one followup, just as you mentioned the five catastrophes. So the baseline going forward is going to be given, you know there's a lot of commentary on climate change so the question's gonna be what's your base case look like forward? Is five catastrophes a year going to be the norm.

MICHAEL HAYHURST: I hope not.



REP. MESKERS (150TH): And then your operating and staffing levels are gonna be different, right? I mean that should be the observation we all draw from that.

MICHAEL HAYHURST: So first of all, yeah, it was an unusu --, well hopefully an unusual year but who knows with climate change, it could get worse and we have other events that come up. We had a heat wave this past summer as well, but again, we want the right size staffing to do our everyday blue sky work, do our capital improvements, do our reliability initiatives, restore to customers, connect new customers and we find that the model that we have in this region particularly with the availability of external resources and the mutual aid process which is a tried and true method across the industry, we feel that we're staffed right sized to respond to these events.

REP. MESKERS (150TH): Well thank you very much.

MICHAEL HAYHURST: Thank you.

REP. ACKERT (8TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for your testimony. And you talked about the blue sky work. I mean we know what, you know I think I've asked this question a few times, you know it's what's the number one reason we lose power?

MICHAEL HAYHURST: Someone said it earlier.

REP. ACKERT (8TH): Trees.

MICHAEL HAYHURST: Right.

REP. ACKERT (8TH): So the blue sky process and I know that you're working with, I believe UConn still on --

MICHAEL HAYHURST: Outage prediction model?

REP. ACKERT (8TH): Exactly and not just prediction models but also tree strengthening in other words forest strengthening in other words thinning rather than blue sky work. That's still a continued process right?

MICHAEL HAYHURST: Routine tree trimming?  
Vegetation management?

REP. ACKERT (8TH): Yeah, more vegetation management cause one of the things that I bring over and over and continue to is that, you know if someone drives in here from out west or down south, they just look at us like you know your trees are over power lines and yes, they are. Why would you do that? You know and we say well cause we love our trees. Yeah, but they fall and they knock down your power. Don't you like power? But anyways, so I guess, are we going to move into a model that is not just the blue sky work or is it going to be the tried and true New England Connecticut way on vegetation?

MICHAEL HAYHURST: Well I think I would suggest that vegetation management has been enhanced in Connecticut over the last few years, both for blue sky and enhanced tree trimming. We have increased our spend in those areas and we are seeing areas that traditionally may have had poor performing circuits due to vegetation management. We track the cause codes of our outages whether it be a tree related issue or a struck pole and we do selectively target those areas where we see a vegetation issue and you know it was touched on earlier, some towns are more sensitive to vegetation management than others so we work closely with the communities to try to get it to the standards that we would like to

see from an electric reliability standpoint and balance the aesthetic needs of the towns and the citizens.

REP. ACKERT (8TH): Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. FERRARO (117TH): Just a followup on Representative Ackert's questioning regarding vegetation management. In the urban planning, I know you have consultations with municipalities with regard to the actual planting of trees and what have you, is there a list of species, a species selection list that would, that trees grow to a certain height and they don't overgrow the lines, and also how far from the lines they should be planted so that they actually don't you know conflict with the tree line, I mean with the wire line and going forward then, the need for trimming and what have you could be I think limited.

MICHAEL HAYHURST: Yes, Representative. There definitely is a list of tree species that are "friendly" to this issue around trees and power lines and we would be happy to supply that list to the committee, and it's a list that our arborists share with the town officials and the town vegetation management arborists, so it definitely is. It relates to tree removal and replacement in a residential street with a good species, but probably more importantly, it's the right-of-ways, particularly under the transmission lines where tree encroachment there could be you know a very, very serious issue resulting in a widespread power outage. So you know when we go into these areas and we do trim, our arborists do share the information and if customers or town leaders are looking for a

type of species that is friendly, we definitely would recommend that and we have that material we could share.

REP. FERRARO (117TH): Thank you, sir for your comments and Thank you, Mr. Chair.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): It's not our first time, it's not our first time at the rodeo here [laughs] and it is good see you. Prior to those five storms, Mike and I both had hair [laughter] and uh, and we certainly have had a go around into the management and I need to, I'm the one who put this bill forward so I have just a couple of questions. How many linemen do you have now besides the new class that you just hired, who will not be up, in Connecticut, based in Connecticut?

MICHAEL HAYHURST: So I would say when we talk about linemen right or --

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): Line people.

MICHAEL HAYHURST: Yeah, put line workers.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): Line workers.

MICHAEL HAYHURST: You know there's overhead line workers, there's underground line workers and there are substation personnel and all those "wrench turners" are directly related to electric operations so we'll forget about engineers, that type of thing, support folks. I don't have the exact numbers, but I would say roughly there's probably 500 craft workers that are directly internal that are related to electric distribution operations and transmission as well.

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SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): Prior to your putting out the request for new employees, what was the average age of them?

MICHAEL HAYHURST: I don't have that, sir,

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): Got any idea?

MICHAEL HAYHURST: Across the industry it's probably in the late 40's.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): Here.

MICHAEL HAYHURST: I don't have the exact answer, I'd be speculating but I would guess, just on my experience, it's people my age, 50's.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): My sense is that there was a large gap in hiring new people and I think that in the last year, a decision was made to begin to hire people and I applaud that and I have to say the tree people, they're excellent. They're working hard, you've hired good contractors. They're working with local tree wardens to manage the issues that our residents are all concerned about because in the weeks after a storm it's like why are those trees there, and in the months after the storm, it's don't take out my tree.

MICHAEL HAYHURST: Right, exactly.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): So I'm used to that argument but I just wanna get my basic comment about how Eversource has changed how they managed electric delivery in the State of Connecticut since the merger really and since deregulation. It's partially gonna be a statement. I think since Hurric --, from Hurricane Bob to Hurricane Irene, we had kind of a fiasco going on in the state. There was no tree trimming. There was minimal work done. I had poles

and mainlines that had growth going up that caused fires routinely. We have aging circuits that are problematic. Hurricane Irene hit, it was an absolute disaster. I don't think you were --

MICHAEL HAYHURST: I was in Massachusetts.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): You were in Massachusetts. It was devastating. It was worse than Sandy and I think that it was a wakeup call there and things began to change but all through that period, the rates kept going up even before Irene, and they've continued to go up. You've reduced staff, although now you're beginning to hire people and the rates still went up whether you reduced staff or brought them on and you know I, I've said this before, I'm all for people making a living but the argument about how expensive a person on the ground is, your recent CEO retired with an \$8 million dollar a year pension and that is, might have done a great job. I actually had a chance to look at the UI salary scale and I have a pretty good idea on what the salary scale is in Eversource and they're just radically different.

I asked the questions about embedding people before storms. They have a different approach than you do. I asked them specific questions about changing out the lights. I don't know if I ever talked to you. One day the new lights appeared in Essex and my phone rang off the hook. I just kept getting complaint after complaint. These lights were different, they were brighter, they were shining into peoples' bedrooms. I called people. They didn't even know what, I had to recommend finding shields. I began going online looking for shields so you know I've had issues.

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The storm that hit a year ago September after you consolidated into three emergency operation centers, I certainly did not know nor did any of the selectmen that I was aware of, even though you told me that I was the only one that complained, [laughs], and that may well be the case, but I actually don't think it was. But none of us knew that Madison had closed as an EOC and the impression I got after that storm hit, it was September, October --

MICHAEL HAYHURST: October 2017.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): People were tripping over themselves in New London. They, the phone system crashed. The information that was being sent out to customers was completely erroneous I mean remarkably erroneous. You'll be on, you won't be on, it's gonna be three days, it's gonna be three hours. It's like people didn't know what to expect. Consumers, customers were calling us. Do I need to find shelter? Do I need to open up a shelter? I will say that since then, things seem to have smoothed out. The last couple of incidents were better. The March storm last year was horrendous. It's a miracle that more people didn't get hurt and more property damage didn't occur. I was out in that storm but you know that was when we met. I had circuits where lines were down, where the police called them in, I called them in, my office called them in and ultimately, called a TV camera cause I was so frustrated by that. We had a public safety issue. We were beyond the make safe period and, and we had wires hanging where people were driving under them continually so, do I think you're improving? The answer is yes. Do I think you have adequate people in the state? No. I'm glad you've hired

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people. You know I didn't ask you how many people did you have on the ground in 2000 versus what you have now, but I suspect you're at a fraction of what you used to have. Your argument was that you didn't need all those people and that you're working with contractors and that the contractors work extremely well with your employees. That has not been my experience.

So I put this bill in. I do not believe that it's within necessarily our purview to dictate to a private company how many people you should hire, but I would argue that there are flaws in your model and I am uncomfortable with the ways things operate there and that's the genesis of this conversation so I'm gonna give you your time to go back.

MICHAEL HAYHURST: So just, as we discussed before. So the October 2017 event we did have some technology issues regarding communications and we were at the energy and technology meeting about a year ago and we talked about that. This was prior to the March events. Our IT folks put a plan in place. We found the issue. It was resolved and then we had those subsequent events. In March and May, we had no more of those issues so I would say that was an unfortunate technical glitch and that was resolved and that was tested and tested satisfactorily during those subsequent events.

As far as, there are always going to be individual anecdotal stories about a police cruiser waited over here for three hours by a downed wire when you have thousands of wires down in these events. You know we work as best as we possibly can with the communities that are the hardest hit and that's where we put our resources when these events happen



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and you know I'm very proud of the work that the employees at Eversource did in those events. It's, as a matter of fact, we won as a company from the Edison Electric Institute, which is the utility organization for all investor-owned utilities. We won a restoration award for those events in March and May so our peers thought that our performance, and when you look at the statistics, the number of trouble spots, the duration of the outage, the number of fire and police calls that were responded to, they're all, it was all very good stories. There are always gonna be people that are not satisfied and that have to be unfortunately, by the nature of their particular outage, may be at the end of the restoration curve because it's a single outage and they may be in a remote area, as it was mentioned earlier, we restore, we respond to public safety events first, and then we restore by the largest number of customers in order. That way, we get the biggest bang for our buck from an outage restoration standpoint, we set town level ETR's.

When you have these major events, we don't rely on you know kind of the technology blue sky day tools that we have to provide estimated times of restoration because it's just so dynamic so what we'll do is that we'll take the 50 towns that are hardest impacted, we'll look at the number of trouble spots in those towns, we'll address that number of trouble spots with the appropriate number of resources, and we'll extrapolate how long we feel it will take to restore, substantially complete is the term we use, those towns.

And when you look at those five events, in the high 90 percentile, we met every one of those town level outage restoration commitments working with our

community liaisons and their counterparts in the communities as well.

VINCENT PACE: If I could add to Mr. Hayhurst's comments. First of all, Senator, we appreciate the very constructive feedback that you and other elected officials provide to the company. We're always learning from the feedback we receive. With respect to the October 29, 2017 storm, we appreciated the chance to come here about 15 days later on November 15, 2017, to appear before this committee and answer questions. PURA then had a proceeding on December 20, 2017 where they asked questions about these technology issues. Discovery was provided and we feel that PURA is comfortable we have the issue resolved.

Regarding the five catastrophic storms Mr. Hayhurst referred to between 2017 and May 2018, I think it's important to recognize that just within less than one month, our personnel and contractors performed over 14 months' worth of work. The devastation was that bad and it was done overall within the PURA mandated time frames, so PURA investigates the work that we do. After every storm we file a report 14 days afterwards to identify key statistics and lessons learned, and when PURA has questions, they call us in and we provide information so that they're comfortable, but we appreciate the feedback and we thank you for that.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): Well thank you and obviously I wasn't here at that point, but we had our own conversation and although you won awards, I think there is a lot of room to do better. I understand the big to small philosophy. We had this conversation. I think one of the fundamental

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changes in the operation of the company has been the disempowerment of the people on the ground and I wanna be clear about my feelings about the actual people who do the work, even you, Mike. No, [laughs] I know how hard you work, I mean and you are the most responsive guy I know. There is, there is a sense on the part of the people who are on the ground dealing with these incidents of incredible commitment to working to get people back up online. I think that the movement, and this is always a challenge as a manager, to go from a situation where people had a lot of say on the ground to no say on the ground to total command and control has actually hurt the situation and we had this conversation about you need to control what's going on. You certainly can't have 169 bosses telling you what to do; however, the morale amongst the people who do the work, regardless of how it filters up to the top is not good. The relationship between the contractors and the employees is not good. Everything, they don't even talk to each other. They talk through the office and there's more than a, more than a dynamic tension, it's an unhealthy tension. In our town, it almost resulted in a contractor getting killed because there was, this happens. I understand we lost somebody from East Haddam recently because a tree fell on him. This is a dangerous job. These people should be paid a decent wage. They put their lives on the line every single storm. They put themselves in situations that I would never, you know, I would never put myself up in a bucket in a 35 mile an hour wind over a river for God's sake, I mean, but there was a live circuit that they thought was dead and they were doing work on it and the contractor on one end, employee on the other and I would say that I don't

sense that team spirit is there amongst those people. And I'm going to leave it at that. You know how I feel.

MICHAEL HAYHURST: Right I just wanna respond just briefly with respect because we had this conversation. Some of what you're referring to, I won't say that you know everyone's happy 100 percent of the time but if you think back a couple of years ago, CL&P had an external workforce on the back shifts as a trouble response organization. For many different reasons, the internal workforce was not used for that position. That has changed 180 degrees. We now have 24/7 troubleshooter or response specialist coverage in the whole State of Connecticut, over 105 soon to be, by the end of this year 126 CL&P employees that are totally dedicated to outage response around-the-clock and that goes along with all the first response type issues wired down so police and fire, etc so that, a couple of years ago, that role was being fulfilled by external contractors. That's all being filled by internal CL&P line workers now.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): And I, and I appreciate that and that model works almost all the time so thank you guys.

MICHAEL HAYHURST: Thank you very much.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD): I appreciate you coming. Sorry for using this as a forum to say what I've already said before. So thank you.

BRYAN HULBERT: Good afternoon members of the Energy and Technology Committee. For the record, my name is Bryan Hulbert. I'm the Executive Director of the Connecticut Farm Bureau Association. I'm here to

HB 5002

SB 845

Dear Chairman Needleman,

According to U.S. Energy Information Administration report published just a few days ago, Connecticut residents pay the third highest rates for electricity in the nation - just behind Hawaii and Alaska (<https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=34932>).

For too long, Connecticut has lagged behind other states by holding onto regressive policies that inhibit new energy solutions. The U.S. News and World Report ranks CT 38th in renewable energy usage (<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/rankings/infrastructure/energy>). We also have allowed our energy infrastructure to become substandard.

For these reasons, I am writing in support for Senate Bill No. 468 and Senate Bill No. 469. I believe these bills can begin to help to move Connecticut forward in providing residents with more cost effective and efficient energy solutions.

I encourage you and your colleagues to continue to promote sustainable energy solutions that will make Connecticut energy more affordable for taxpayers and make our state more attractive to new business.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kind regards,

Joseph J. Selvaggio  
Westbrook, CT 06498

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"Put it to them briefly, so they will read it; clearly, so they will appreciate it; picturesquely, so they will remember it; and, above all, accurately, so they will be guided by its light." - Joseph Pulitzer



# Connecticut

Testimony in Support of

Proposed Bill No. 469:

AAC Utility Response Times for Restoration of Electric Service and Utility Minimum Staffing Levels  
Energy and Technology Committee  
February 21, 2019

AARP is a nonpartisan, nonprofit social welfare organization with a membership that helps people 50+ have independence, choice and control in ways that are beneficial and affordable to them and society as a whole. AARP is an advocate nationwide for the rights of people aged 50 and older. A substantial percentage of AARP's members live on fixed or limited incomes. A major priority for AARP is to protect consumers from utility expenses that may endanger their health and financial security. We have 38 million members nationally and nearly 600,000 here in Connecticut. We speak today to support of Proposed Bill No. 469.

A secure and productive society depends on a reliable and resilient energy and telecommunications infrastructure. One striking example was seen in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy in late 2012. That devastating storm caused billions of dollars' worth of damage and killed at least 160 people in the US. It also left 8.6 million homes in 16 states and the District of Columbia without power, some for weeks or more. As these people soon understood, the storm damage meant much more than going without lights at home because the US power generation system underpins countless other technologies. Many people lacked heat, public transportation, and traffic lights. With electricity out for days, cell towers ran out of backup power. The storm disabled more than one-quarter of all cell towers spread across ten states, leaving millions unable to make phone calls. Similarly, cable operators reported that some 25 percent of households lost access to services including Internet, TV, and phone connections.

The damage caused by Superstorm Sandy is a stark reminder of the serious problems that threaten the reliability of the US energy transmission system. These problems include an aging infrastructure, insufficient ongoing investment, increased energy demand, and greater reliance on gas-generated electricity. At the national level, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) is responsible for the development and enforcement of mandatory electric reliability standards for the bulk power system. The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) has the responsibility to ensure the reliability of the system at the local distribution level.

PURA should vigorously enforce strict, mandatory rules for operating the energy infrastructure to ensure safe and reliable energy service for all Americans. This legislation should require PURA to establish clear network-reliability metrics and standards, monitor and report on service-provider performance, and enforce sanctions and impose remedial actions if utility performance falls short.

Additionally, this legislation should increase appropriated funds for research, development, and demonstration of technologies that will improve the reliability and security of our transmission systems in order to prevent the issues that resulted for Superstorm Sandy and other recent major storms. It is important however, that this legislation require PURA to hold hearings on various proposals developed to ensure that they are feasible and not too costly. It is essential that the appropriate balance of reliability and cost, as Connecticut ratepayers already pay some of the highest electric rates in the Continental United States.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY  
OF**

Charles Eves

**UIL HOLDINGS CORPORATION (United Illuminating, Southern Connecticut Gas and  
Connecticut Natural Gas)**

Regarding

**S.B. 469, AN ACT CONCERNING UTILITY RESPONSE TIMES FOR RESTORATION  
OF ELECTRIC SERVICE AND UTILITY MINIMUM STAFFING LEVELS**

**Before the  
Energy & Technology Committee**

**Legislative Office Building  
February 21, 2019**

Good morning/afternoon Senators Needleman, Fonfara and Formica, Representatives Arconti , Allie-Brennan and Ferraro, and the members of the Energy & Technology Committee.

My name is Charles Eves and I am the Vice President of Electric Operations for Avangrid, the parent company for United Illuminating, Southern Connecticut Gas and Connecticut Natural Gas, and wholly-owned indirect subsidiaries of Avangrid, Inc. I have over 30 years of experience in the electric utility industry. My current responsibilities include overseeing the day-to-day operation of our New York, Maine and Connecticut electric system operations, as well as leading our planning for, and response to, storms that impact Connecticut customers. During storms, I have served as UI's Planning Team Lead. The planning team is tasked with assessing the potential impact of the storm, ensuring we amass resources consistent with our emergency preparedness plan, conducting damage assessment and establishing the restoration plan and estimated restoration times at a global and individual customer level.

S.B. 469 proposes to amend the Connecticut General Statutes to address utility response times for restoration of electric service and to establish minimum staffing levels for utility line crews.<sup>1</sup>

UI's staffing numbers are based on current and forecasted work load (both for capital and O&M construction projects and system maintenance) and submitted on a yearly basis to, and ultimately approved by, Connecticut's Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA). Accordingly, PURA continues to review the EDCs' staffing levels to ensure that Eversource and UI provide cost effective service to their customers for clear sky activities to maintain the distribution system. Furthermore,

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<sup>1</sup> S.B. 469 states, "That the general statutes be amended to require improved utility response times for restoration of electric service after power outages and to establish minimum staffing levels for utility line crews and related utility employee positions."



PURA reviews the EDCs' Incident Response Plans to ensure that the Companies are well prepared to provide restoration service to Connecticut residents after extreme weather events.

UI continuously monitors work load, staffing requirements and equipment stock on a monthly basis to determine the appropriate staffing levels. The need for additional resources, whether it be during periods of heavy work load and/or in emergency/storm situations, is efficiently managed through the use of outside contractors and mutual assistance from neighboring utilities, including AVANGRID sister utilities from New York and Maine. This approach enables the EDCs to effectively and cost-efficiently scale up or down to the appropriate staffing level to meet both customer and system work load requirements.

Requiring PURA to set minimum staffing levels may lead to unintended consequences, such as a requirement to provide a level of staffing that is not commensurate with the staffing required to maintain the electric distribution system, resulting in unnecessary costs to be borne by customers.

The other component of the bill is to require improved utility response times for restoration of electric service after power outages. Power restoration after a major weather event is an exercise in work management. Faster restoration times can be achieved by either reducing the amount of work that the storm creates, or by scaling the resources to maximum levels that can be safely coordinated in their operations. The vast majority of the damage that occurs to the electric system in major events is due to trees or limbs falling on the electric infrastructure. To reduce the work, the Company has been implementing a tree trimming program to establish a ground to sky utility protection zone facilities. Removing trees and limbs that overhang our facilities is the

most effective way to minimize the work created by storms and therefore the amount of time our customers are without power.

To speed response for the outages that do occur, the Company scales it's resources 5 to 10 times typical daily resource levels and doubles it's shift durations. This provides a resource potential of 10 to 20 times the typical daily resource level to respond significant weather events. The Company leverages our employees, contractor relationships and mutual assistance processes to scale our resources to these levels in a cost effective manner. The Company believes setting a static target for resources, that is orders of magnitude greater than the resource level needed to execute planned work on a daily basis, is not in the best long term interest for customers, and that the current process overseen by PURA balances the need to respond quickly to storms with the cost impact to our customers.

I thank you for this opportunity to offer this testimony on behalf of UI on Raised Senate Bill 469, AN ACT CONCERNING UTILITY RESPONSE TIMES FOR RESTORATION OF ELECTRIC SERVICE AND UTILITY MINIMUM STAFFING LEVELS. I would be happy to answer any questions.

For additional information, you may also contact Al Carbone, Manager, AVANGRID/UIL State Government Relations at (203) 671-4421.



**Betsy Gara**  
**Executive Director**  
**Connecticut Council of Small Towns**  
**Before the Energy & Technology Committees**  
**February 21, 2019**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on behalf of the Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) relative to **SB-469, AN ACT CONCERNING UTILITY RESPONSE TIMES FOR RESTORATION OF ELECTRIC SERVICE AND UTILITY MINIMUM STAFFING LEVELS**, which would require improved utility response times for restoration of electric service after power outages and establish minimum staffing levels for utility line crews and related utility employee positions.

COST supports the intent of **SB-469**, which recognizes that improving utility response times for the restoration of electric service after power outages is critical to the residents and businesses in our communities.

Following severe storm events in 2011, utilities implemented many measures to improve storm response and restoration efforts, including developing communication outreach plans, identifying critical facilities and vulnerable populations to prioritize service, hardening infrastructure and trimming trees to prevent downed wires, responding to public safety issues with single access roads in smaller communities, and improving the overall coordination of restoration efforts with local officials.

Given these “lessons learned”, town officials were disappointed in 2017 regarding the utility response efforts and raised concerns regarding communication, management of work crews, accuracy of outage maps, etc. At that time, COST recommended that electric utilities continue to work to:

- 1) Improve coordination of restoration efforts with town officials, including the dispatching of crews to ground downed wires;
- 2) Provide emergency contact information to ensure that town officials can get in contact with utilities to dispatch crews to immediately respond to dangerous or life threatening situations;
- 3) Identify a centralized contact point for town officials to communicate with utility officials to better coordinate efforts between utility work crews and public works departments;



- 4) Identify critical public safety service areas, such as fire or police stations as priority areas for restoration efforts, even if they are not in densely populated areas;
- 5) Identify areas that serve vulnerable populations, such as elderly housing, as priority areas in restoration efforts, even if they are not in densely populated areas;
- 6) Identify key access roads in small towns that are vital to obtain food, water and health care services or to evacuate residents; and,
- 7) Ensure methods for employing sufficient staffing levels in the event of widespread outages, including customer service representatives and work crews.

We believe that Connecticut's electric utilities have worked hard to address these issues. In fact, some towns have indicated that they were pleased with the response efforts of electric utilities following recent outages. However, other towns raised concerns that staffing and response times to recent outages were inadequate.

Clearly, continuing to focus on ways of improving response times and ensuring adequate staffing is in the best interest of Connecticut's communities.

**Connecticut Council of Small Towns**

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TESTIMONY OF  
 MICHAEL HAYHURST  
 VICE PRESIDENT OF ELECTRIC SYSTEM OPERATIONS  
 EVERSOURCE ENERGY  
 Before the Energy & Technology Committee  
 February 21, 2019

**RE: S.B. 469, AN ACT CONCERNING UTILITY RESPONSE TIMES FOR RESTORATION OF ELECTRIC SERVICE AND UTILITY MINIMUM STAFFING LEVELS**

Good morning Senators Needleman and Fonfara, Representatives Arconti and Allie-Brennan, and other members of the Energy and Technology Committee.

My name is Michael Hayhurst. I am a Vice President of Electric System Operations for Eversource Energy (“Eversource”). I have over 30 years of experience in the electric utility industry, having started my career working directly in the field as a worker responsible for cable splicing, cable pulling, underground electrical construction activity and direct, physical restoration of service in response to outages.

My current responsibilities include overseeing the day-to-day operation of our Connecticut electric system operations, as well as leading our planning for, and response to, storms that impact Connecticut customers. During storms, I serve as the on-site day-shift Incident Commander – stationed in our Berlin, CT Incident Command Center – leading our efforts to restore power.

S.B. 469 proposes to amend the Connecticut General Statutes to address utility response times for restoration of electric service and to establish minimum staffing levels for utility line crews.<sup>1</sup>

Eversource does not support SB 469 because the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (“PURA”) already has the necessary authority to regulate these two important issues. More importantly, PURA has already exercised, and it continues to exercise, significant day-to-day oversight over these two areas, as evidenced by the following information:

- Connecticut General Statute (“C.G.S.”) § 16-32e(b) requires Eversource and other utility companies to file an emergency response plan (“ERP”) with PURA every two years; and it authorizes PURA to initiate dockets to evaluate those plans.<sup>2</sup> That statute also requires each utility company’s ERP filed

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<sup>1</sup> S.B. 469 states, “That the general statutes be amended to require improved utility response times for restoration of electric service after power outages and to establish minimum staffing levels for utility line crews and related utility employee positions.”

<sup>2</sup> Section 16-32e(b) states in relevant part, “Not later than July 1, 2012, and every two years thereafter, each public service company, as defined in section 16-1, each telecommunications company, as defined in section 16-1, that installs, maintains, operates or controls poles, wires, conduits or other fixtures under or over any public highway for the provision of telecommunications service authorized by section 16-247c, each voice over Internet protocol service provider, as defined in section 28-30b, and each municipal utility furnishing electric, gas or water service shall file with the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority, the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection and each municipality located within the service area of the public service company, telecommunications company, voice over Internet protocol service provider or municipal utility an updated plan for restoring service which is interrupted as a result of an emergency . . .”

with PURA to explain how it will prepare for, and respond to, different levels of customer outages.<sup>3</sup> In response to utility companies filing their ERPs every two years, PURA has initiated dockets to evaluate the ERPs, including most recently Docket No. 18-03-29, 2018 PURA Review Of Connecticut Public Service Company Plans For Restoration Of Service That Is Interrupted As A Result Of An Emergency, where PURA evaluated the ERPs that were filed in 2018.

- C.G.S. §§ 16-32h(d)(1) and 16-32h(d)(2) authorize PURA to establish performance standards for minimum staffing level targets for each utility company and typical restoration time targets for each utility company for larger storms in which ten percent or more of customers are out of power for more than 48 hours.<sup>4</sup> In compliance with these requirements, PURA already established those performance standards in its November 1, 2012 decision in Docket No. 12-06-09, PURA Establishment Of Performance Standards For Electric And Gas Companies.
- Also, in compliance with these requirements, PURA approved a Matrix in Eversource's ERP that addresses, among other things, the following criteria for five different storm "event levels": (1) the typical number of employee and contractor personnel needed; (2) the typical time period within which a global statewide restoration projection should be issued; and (3) the typical number of days needed to restore power. For convenience, a copy of that Matrix is provided in Attachment 1 Eversource's written testimony. This Matrix shows that PURA has already provided Eversource with clear direction on typical staffing levels and restoration times for five different levels of storm events, which are designated as event levels 1-5 in the Matrix.
- Moreover, in order to ensure compliance and to continue its active oversight over utilities, PURA's Docket No. 86-11-18, DPUC Review of Performance of UI, CL&P and SNETCO in Restoring Service After Storm Carl, requires Eversource to file a post-storm report with PURA no later than 14 days after completion of restoration for each storm event, so that PURA can evaluate key data for each storm restoration.
- In addition, regarding staffing levels for storm restoration events, PURA carefully evaluates utility company staffing levels in rate cases that are initiated under C.G.S. § 16-19. In Eversource's most recent rate case in 2017-18 in Docket No. 17-10-46, Application Of The Connecticut Light And Power Company D/B/A Eversource Energy To Amend Its Rate Schedules, PURA approved a plan in which Eversource will hire 100 new, incremental Connecticut utility workers over three years: 33 in 2018,

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<sup>3</sup> Section 16-32e(b) states "[e]ach such plan shall include such company's, provider's or municipal utility's response for service outages affecting more than ten per cent, thirty per cent, fifty per cent and seventy per cent of such company's, provider's or municipal utility's customers."

<sup>4</sup> Section 16-32h(d)(1) and (d)(2) state in relevant part, "(d) The authority shall, in the docket initiated pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, establish standards for acceptable performance in an emergency in which more than ten per cent of any utility's customers are without service for more than forty-eight consecutive hours. The standards established by the authority shall include, but not be limited to, provisions for:

"(1) Minimum staffing and equipment levels for each utility, based on the number of customers served by such utility and the nature of the infrastructure deployed to serve such utility's customers, in such emergency;

"(2) Targets for recovery and restoration of service in emergencies for service outages affecting more than ten per cent, thirty per cent, fifty per cent and seventy per cent of such utility's customers; . . ."

33 in 2019 and 34 in 2020.<sup>5</sup> On January 31, 2019, Eversource informed PURA that Eversource surpassed its hiring goal of 33 utility workers for 2018 by hiring 57 workers in 2018.<sup>6</sup>

- Finally, regarding staffing levels for storm restoration events, Eversource encourages the legislature to avoid passing any law that requires fixed, mandatory in-house staffing levels because we have to balance the equally important goals of (1) ensuring reliable electric service and reasonable restoration times following storm events, and (2) maintaining reasonable electric rates for consumers and businesses. It would be too costly for customers if we had year-round in-house staffing levels based on the level of work needed to respond to catastrophic storms.
  - Having sufficient in-house workers to perform day-to-day work – and supplementing them with contractors to repair storm damage – is a tried and true model used by other utilities throughout the nation

Eversource understands the vital importance of these two issues to the members of the E&T Committee, as well as to the entire State of Connecticut and the customers it proudly serves in 149 municipalities. Because the legislature has already empowered PURA to oversee these two issues – and because PURA has proactively and closely regulated Eversource in these two areas – S.B. 469 is unnecessary.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony.

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<sup>5</sup> PURA Docket No. 17-10-46, April 18, 2018 Decision, Page 59, Order No. 8 (stating “No later than January 31, 2019, and annually thereafter, the Company shall submit annual filings demonstrating that it actually hired up to 33 incremental FTEs [full time equivalent employees] in 2018, 33 incremental FTEs in 2019 and 34 incremental FTEs in 2020.”)

<sup>6</sup> PURA Docket No. 17-10-46, January 31, 2019 correspondence, compliance filing with Order No. 8.

### Appendix 1

#### Event Level Matrix (“ELM”) in Table 2 of the Eversource-CL&P Emergency Response Plan

Event Type	Typical Number of Customers out at Peak	Typical Number of Trouble Spots	Weather Type <sup>2</sup>	Typical Resource Strategy <sup>3</sup>	Typical Restoration Duration	Typical Global ETR Availability Timeframe	Typical IMT Activation Level	Typical Damage Assessment and Typical Restoration Strategy <sup>6</sup>	Typical Logistics Strategy <sup>7</sup>
5	0% - 9% <sup>1</sup> (<125k)	<2000	Warm Weather	200 – 300 Line Resources	1-3 Days	< 24 hours	General Staff/Comm Officer	Event/Hybrid	Centralized support with Regional Staging Areas
			Cold Weather	250 – 350 Line Resources			ICC <sup>5</sup> Inactive - Active		
4	10% - 29% <sup>1</sup> (125k – 380K)	1500 – 10,000	Warm Weather	250 – 800 Line Resources	2-6 Days	< 36 hours	General Staff/Comm Officer/ All <sup>4</sup>	Event/Hybrid/ Circuit	Centralized support with Regional Staging Areas
			Cold Weather	300 – 1000 Line Resources			ICC <sup>5</sup> Active		
3	30% - 49% <sup>1</sup> (375K – 650K)	8,000 – 25,000	Warm Weather	750 – 1250 Line Resources	5-10 Days	< 48 hours	All <sup>4</sup>	Hybrid/Circuit	Decentralized support. with Regional Staging Areas
			Cold Weather	800 – 1500 Line Resources			ICC <sup>5</sup> Active		
2	50% - 69% <sup>1</sup> (625k – 870k)	15,000 – 48,000	Warm Weather	1000 – 1800 Line Resources	8-21 Days	<48 hours	All <sup>4</sup>	Hybrid/Circuit	Decentralized support. with Regional Staging Areas
			Cold Weather	1250 – 2000 Line Resources			ICC <sup>5</sup> Active		
1	70% - 100% <sup>1</sup> (> 870k)	> 35,000	Warm Weather	> 1500 Line Resources	> 18 Days	<48 hours	All <sup>4</sup>	Circuit	Decentralized support. with Regional Staging Areas
			Cold Weather	> 1750 Line Resources			ICC <sup>5</sup> Active		

Note 1: Peak numbers are based on customer count of 1,265,772 as of May 1, 2018

Note 2: Weather Type describes general classification of weather associated with typical weather related events. Warm Weather includes weather events such as extreme heat waves, thunderstorms, squall line wind events, and weather generally associated with the movement of a weather system from west to east. Cold Weather includes weather events such as wind events, Nor'easters, blizzards, and weather generally associated with the movement of a weather system up the northeast coast. Tropical events pose a specific risk and are classified based on the strength, movement, and classification of the system by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Note 3: Resource Strategy includes the use of internal resources, resources from sister companies, contractors, and utility mutual assistance. See **Section Error! Reference source not found., Error! Reference source not found. and Section Error! Reference source not found., Error! Reference source not found..**

Note 4: The IMT [Incident Management Team] structure can be activated at Level 5 and is activated at Level 4. The IMT organization for a Level 3, 2, or 1 event expands horizontally with additional satellite locations and accompanying support and supervision to maintain appropriate spans of control.

Note 5: ICC [Incident Command Center] Activation can be influenced by additional factors. These factors can include the breadth of the forecasted or actual damage (that is, the number of regions or AWCs [Area Work Centers] impacted), type of damage, and number of external resources deployed. For a Level 5 event, the Incident Command Post (ICP) can remain at the System Operations Center (SOC).

Note 6: The Damage Assessment and Restoration Strategies can be influenced by additional factors: the breadth of the forecasted or actual damage (that is, the number of regions or AWCs impacted), type of damage, and number of external resources deployed. See **Section Error! Reference source not found., Error! Reference source not found. and Section Error! Reference source not found., Error! Reference source not found..**



Testimony in support of

Senate Bill 469: AN ACT CONCERNING UTILITY RESPONSE TIMES FOR  
RESTORATION  
OF ELECTRIC SERVICE AND UTILITY MINIMUM STAFFING LEVELS

Submitted by  
Catherine Iino  
First Selectwoman  
Town of Killingworth  
323 Route 81  
Killingworth, Connecticut 06419

21 January 2019

From Hurricane Irene and the October Surprise snow and ice storm in 2011 to the nor'easters of March 2018, Killingworth residents have suffered extended and extensive power outages. We love our woods and our rural isolation, so it does not surprise us that we lose power. What is frustrating is the delays in power restoration, the miscommunication, and the difficulty we have in coordinating town efforts and Eversource's response.

I cannot say how many crews Eversource needs to have on standby, but the problems created by its reliance on out-of-region crews in the aftermath of storms are very evident.

Nonlocal crews are often delayed, especially after a major storm affecting a wide area beyond Connecticut. Internal communications seem to be dismal: Eversource is unable to say where its crews are, to estimate completion times, or even to inform us of the planned sequence of repairs. Crews that are unfamiliar with the area frequently make mistakes in prioritizing repairs or rerouting service. Eversource's Emergency Operations Centers don't seem to know where the imported crews are or what their schedule is. And cooperation between town crews and Eversource crews, which could speed recovery, is difficult to arrange.

I understand that disaster recovery is not an assembly line but a set of unique and fluid conditions. Nevertheless, if Amazon can tell you where your package is at every moment, a modern corporate giant ought to be able to track its crews. And it ought to be able to say, half way through the day, whether predictions made at the beginning of the day are still attainable. It's long past time to require our utilities to provide not just the infrastructure for basic services but the staffing needed to keep those services flowing. I support Senate Bill 469's goal of improving the reliability on which our residents, our businesses, and our public sector depend.



## **The Energy and Technology Committee**

**Public Hearing, February 21, 2019**

**Office of Consumer Counsel**

**Elin Swanson Katz, Consumer Counsel**

Testimony of Elin Swanson Katz

### **Raised Bill No. 469**

#### ***An Act Concerning Utility Response Times For Restoration of Electric Service and Utility Minimum Staffing Levels***

The Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) has reviewed Raised Bill No. 469, which seeks to require electric distribution companies (EDCs) to improve utility response times for restoration of electric service after power outages and to establish minimum staffing levels for utility line crews and related utility employee positions.

OCC fully supports improvement in outage response and storm restoration times. However, OCC suggests that the details as to the cause for specific outages and unsatisfactory restoration times be examined in a proceeding by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA), as in the unique present circumstances, additional line workers or other staff may not be the solution to these issues. Eversource, for example, is already in the process of hiring an additional 100 lineworkers, and additional staff beyond those increases may not be the most efficient or cost-effective way to reduce outages.

A review of appropriate staffing levels for the various functions within the EDC is performed in each company's rate proceeding by PURA and interested parties including OCC. Proposed staffing levels are reviewed and expenses for the allowed employee complement are allowed in rates. Over the past fifteen years, funding for each EDC's

linemen organization has received much scrutiny in PURA rate and storm proceedings. Recently, in the Settlement Agreement negotiated between Eversource, OCC and PURA's Prosecutorial Staff, settling Eversource's electric rate proceeding that was concluded in March 2018, there is a plan to hire a net of 100 additional line workers over the three year rate plan period 2018-2020. The first compliance filing made on January 31, 2019, showed that Eversource exceeded the target of 33 incremental line workers, hiring a net 57 in 2019. Increasing line worker levels is in progress at Eversource.

While OCC is concerned that customers, including Commercial and Industrial consumers, may be frustrated with outage lengths, simply hiring additional full time line workers may not be the most cost-effective way to shorten outage lengths. All EDCs currently rely much more on outside contractors and Mutual Aid crews from other utilities for major storm restoration. This process is consistent with the companies' Emergency Response Plan (ERP) and the utilization of pre-staging for expected storm events as approved by PURA. If the legislature believes that modifications are necessary, OCC suggests that PURA should be directed to open an investigation into perceived problems with the deployment of outside contractors, any distribution system weaknesses and any other necessary modifications to the ERP.

**JOINT  
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797-1660**

**2019**

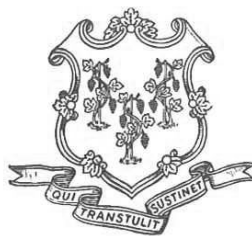
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**State of Connecticut****SENATE***Chair*

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Legislative Management Committee

Regulation Review Committee

Transportation Committee

Veterans' Affairs Committee

Energy and Technology Committee

February 21, 2019

LOB 1B 10:00 AM

In **SUPPORT** of Senate Bill 469*An Act Concerning Utility Response Times for Restoration of Electric Service  
and Utility Minimum Staffing Levels*

Chairman Needleman, Chairman Arconti, and distinguished members of the Energy and Technology Committee, I am here to testify in **support** of Senate Bill 469, *An Act Concerning Utility Response Times for Restoration of Electric Service and Utility Minimum Staffing Levels*.

My name is Cathy Osten and I represent the 19<sup>th</sup> Senate District, which includes the towns of Columbia, Franklin, Hebron, Lebanon, Ledyard, Lisbon, Marlborough, Montville, Norwich, and Sprague.

I'd like to begin my testimony by acknowledging and thanking Senator Needleman for his leadership on this critical public safety issue. As some of you may recall, following Tropical Storm Irene and the October 2011 Nor'easter, then-Governor Dannel P. Malloy created the Two Storm Panel, on which I had the honor and privilege to serve. Included in the panel's final list of recommendations was the establishment of minimum staffing levels for utility line crews and related utility employee positions. While efforts have been made in the years since to address our state's utilities' storm response and other emergencies, this is one critical area that has gotten worse, not better. An increased reliance on outsourcing, the use of private contractors, and a reluctance to fill vacant positions has contributed to worsening response times.

In my view, it is inexcusable for our state's utilities to continuously request rates hikes from PURA year-after-year while our state's residents, businesses, and towns suffer from poor customer service from these entities. It is my understanding that PURA was requiring an increase of linemen in the last rate case. It is important to see more Connecticut-based workers in the ranks of Eversource.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in **support** of Senate Bill 469. I look forward to working with the leadership and members of this committee on this bill's passage.



*Communications  
Workers of America*

*The Connecticut Union  
of  
Telephone Workers, Inc.*



***Local 1298***

AFL-CIO

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Testimony of CWA Local 1298 in support of raised SB 469

Energy and Technology Committee

February 21, 2019

David Weidlich, President, CWA Local 1298

CWA has reviewed raised ~~Senate Bill 469~~. It is important for the Committee to recognize the need for minimum staffing not only for electric company workers but for Frontier and cable providers as well. Electricity and internet are both critical to the residents of our state who work from home and even more critical for Connecticut businesses. Timely coordinated restoration is critical.

I would be glad to meet with and provide answers to any questions the Committee may have or provide any additional information for the Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,  
David Weidlich Jr, President, CWA Local 1298