

Questions for the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority Nominee

By: Jessica Schaeffer-Helmecki, Senior Legislative Attorney
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Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA)

PURA's commissioners are appointed by the governor with the legislature's advice and consent.

PURA regulates the rates and services of investor-owned utility companies, like Eversource, United Illuminating (UI), Southern Connecticut Gas Company, and CT Water. Among other things, it also licenses the state's retail electric suppliers and conducts various studies and investigations into utility-related issues.

PURA is administratively within the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) but is funded through a charge paid by the companies it regulates.

Questions

1. You recently served as vice president of state government relations for UI. What drew you back to public service?
2. UI is subject to PURA's regulatory oversight. Do you anticipate any conflicts of interest when UI matters come before PURA? If so, how will you respond to these conflicts? Are there circumstances under which you anticipate recusing yourself?
3. Having served in the legislature, private energy sector (both at UI and at a fuel cell company), and now at PURA, have you gained any insights with respect to how these entities share information with one another? Do you think there are opportunities to increase transparency among them? More broadly, how do you think your past experiences will shape how you approach your role with PURA?

4. You served as a chair of the Energy and Technology committee from 2019-2022. During that time, the legislature passed [PA 20-5](#), also known as the “Take Back Our Grid Act.” Among other things, it required PURA to develop a framework for performance-based regulation. What is the current status of these efforts? How does the framework’s development and implementation align with the expectations you had at the time the act passed?
5. Two longstanding debates about PURA’s structure have recently gained renewed attention: the number of PURA commissioners and PURA’s location organizationally within DEEP. Do you have any comment on either of these debates?
6. Electric ratepayers felt a rate hike in the summer and policymakers have been talking about it ever since. In your view, was it unavoidable? Are there any lessons that PURA should learn from this outcome? If so, what are they?
7. [Reporting in the Hartford Courant](#) has described “an angry standoff between the utilities and the regulators” that, some say if unresolved, “could hurt Connecticut’s energy future by keeping the utilities from acting as essential partners as the state expands electrification to accommodate an anticipated explosion in computing driven by artificial intelligence.” What is your response? Would you characterize the current situation as an angry standoff? How will your appointment to PURA affect this dynamic?
8. Gas and electric utilities have alleged that an unstable regulatory environment and rate case decisions that were unfavorable to them have led to credit downgrades that will make utility work more expensive in the future and ultimately negatively impact ratepayers. Are they wrong?
9. In your view, does Connecticut currently strike the right balance on protections for hardship customers (e.g., low-income households and people with severe illnesses)?
10. The state’s renewable energy policies include (1) clean energy tariffs, which allow customers to benefit from on-site renewable energy; (2) energy procurements conducted by DEEP to provide stable funding for renewable projects; and (3) the renewable portfolio standard, which obliges utilities and suppliers to get a certain amount of their power from renewable sources. PURA’s role in these policies varies, but how does the authority balance support for these programs in line with the state’s energy strategies and carbon emissions goals with the ratepayer impact of providing this support?

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