

Questions for the Connecticut Siting Council Nominee

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Connecticut Siting Council

The Connecticut Siting Council has jurisdiction over siting electric transmission lines, certain substations, generating and storage facilities, telecommunications facilities, and hazardous waste facilities. These projects require a council certificate or declaratory ruling to proceed. In determining whether to approve a project, the council weighs the public need for the facility and its environmental impacts.

The council's membership varies based on the type of work it is doing. Energy and telecommunications members include representatives from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA). Hazardous waste members include representatives from the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection and the Department of Public Health, though these members have not met in over a decade. In either case, the council also includes members appointed by the governor and legislative leaders.

By law, the governor appoints the council's chairperson from among the members he appoints and the legislature must confirm the chairperson appointment. The legislature does not confirm the appointments of other council members.

Questions

1. Your work at the Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) and elsewhere has included advocating for increased broadband deployment. How will this experience inform your approach on Siting Council decisions regarding telecommunications infrastructure?
2. Municipal officials called for a statewide moratorium on large battery storage facilities. In your view, is the council's process for evaluating energy storage facilities adequate?
3. Developers who appear frequently before the council become familiar with the process in a way that residents or local officials may not be. What can the council do to ensure that the public is able to meaningfully participate in council proceedings?
4. A 2024 law added OCC to the list of agencies the council must consult with and solicit comments from. As a former head of the OCC, what do you think this requirement will add to the information the council already receives?
5. By law, the council must provide written responses to any environmental justice concerns raised in agency consultations or by intervenors. This requirement is fairly new, added by the legislature in 2024. Is the council prepared to provide these responses should they arise? What process will the council take to develop a response to such a concern?
6. Should the Siting Council play a role in addressing the state's high energy costs?
7. DEEP's recent [study and report](#) on the Siting Council includes a recommendation that the council apply greater scrutiny to transmission upgrade projects, including seeking outside consultants and collaborating with PURA to consider rate impacts. In your opinion, is this something the council should pursue?
8. Advocates for municipalities have argued that the council should take into account the number of facilities a town already has when considering an application to add another one. Are some towns overburdened, and, if so, what can or should the council do about it?
9. The law requires companies that generate, transmit, or distribute electricity to annually report 10-year load and resources forecasts to the council, from which the council may issue its own report. DEEP has suggested that this report might be duplicative of other efforts at DEEP and ISO-New England. What is your view?
10. How can you determine whether the council has the staff and expertise it needs to fulfill its duties?
11. Some advocates allege that members of the public do not find out about proposed projects until it is too late for them to fully participate in the process. How can the council determine whether notices for council proceedings and other actions are reaching their intended audiences?

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