

# Energy and Technology Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No:** SB-246 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT REQUIRING A STUDY OF NATURAL GAS RATES FOR

**Title:** COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL CUSTOMERS.

**Vote Date:** 3/17/2026

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 2/24/2026

**File No.:**

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## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Energy & Technology Committee

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

Farming in Connecticut sometimes demands increased heating and gas consumption intermittently during the year. This is a necessity that Greenhouse owners in particular have in order to produce crops successfully in the wintertime. Currently, annual Demand Charges are determined by usage within a 24-hour period, which may be an inaccurate reflection for the typical annual use. As a result, this may lead agricultural operators to face unfairly high rates if they happen to exceed their daily limit to farm successfully. This bill seeks to examine these concerns in hopes of producing a solution in the future.

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

### **[Katie Dykes, Commissioner, Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection \(DEEP\):](#)**

DEEP supports this bill and expresses a willingness to coordinate with the committee. They'd also like to note the complexity of rate design and its interconnectedness across classes.

### **[Sean Scanlon, State Comptroller, Office of the State Comptroller:](#)**

Sean Scanlon expresses support for this bill. He takes note of an issue experienced by a Greenhouse owner in Jewett City in which they felt their energy costs spiked unfairly, and how this bill would address their concerns. He goes on to assert that the current inflexible model is unfair for greenhouse owners and advocates for a quarterly model as opposed to the current annual one. He concludes with requesting that the committee forgo this study to pass a bill implementing quarterly demand charge adjustments.

**Claire Coleman, Consumer Counsel, Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC):**

The OCC asserts that PURA has conducted similar studies in the past, which they greatly participated in. They want to inform the committee that regardless of which agency is conducting the study, they wish to provide their input and expertise.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

**Brian Lanoue, State Representative, State of Connecticut:**

Brian Lanoue expresses support of this bill but expresses that its unnecessary due to the clear need to support the stat's farmers and agricultural operators.

He provides an example of how a family in his district heating their greenhouses with gas exceeding their daily limit for one night led to a drastic increase in their demand charge rate for the rest of their annual period. He cites this example as justification for proposing farmland and agricultural operators get assessed on demand charges for natural gas on a quarterly period as opposed to an annual period. He asserts that this method is a lot fairer due to most farmland owners use their gas capacity sparingly throughout the year. He concludes by proclaiming the importance of supporting the state's hard-working farmers with the state's power.

**Louis Demicco, President, Jewett City Greenhouses Inc.:**

Louis Demicco brings attention to how The Eversource Demand Charge for 12 months is calculated by usage in a 24-hour period. He emphasizes the expensive nature of Farming in Connecticut and supports adjusting demand charges to be reset quarterly.

**Susan Pronovost, Executive Director, CT Greenhouse Growers Association:**

The CT Greenhouse Growers Association supports this bill. They highlight the necessity of heat for greenhouse growers in the winter months and the unfair rate hikes that may follow as a result of spiked gas consumption. They state that the current demand charge system for greenhouse owners is unsustainable and seek change.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Anonymous 10**

This individual opposes this study, believing it to be too vague.

**GENERAL COMMENTS:**

**Adam Woda, Director, Dispatch Energy:**

Dispatch Energy brings attention to fuel cells installed by private sector corporations experiencing waivers of natural gas delivery charges and the fact that SCEF programs are ineligible for such waivers. They request for C.G.S. Section 16-243hh to be adjusted to allow SCEF fuel cells to receive these waivers.

**Christie Prescott, Vice President of Regulatory, The United Illuminating Company (UI):**

UI expresses concern that a broad study without clear parameters may cause complexity of variables to be lost and misinterpreted.

**Reported by: Tatyana Massa**

**Date: March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

