

Energy and Technology Committee SENATE FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: SB-321 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)
AN ACT CONCERNING REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN EXCAVATION
Title: PROJECTS.
Vote Date: 3/17/2026
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 3/5/2026
File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

[Energy and Technology Committee](#)

CO- SPONSORS OF BILL:

[Rep. Kerry S. Wood, 29th Dist.](#)
[Rep. Michael D. Quinn, 82nd Dist.](#)
[Rep. Stephen R. Meskers, 150th Dist.](#)

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would dictate that an individual is not required to keep an excavation site on a public highway open for a period after the completion of excavation work, unless required by a permit. The reason for this bill is to remove unnecessary roadblocks for utility projects such as lengthy timelines, and to make utility installation more accessible for utility companies and individuals benefitting from the use of the utility services such as broadband internet installation.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

The original bill does not specify the requirements of someone who obtains a permit to excavate a public highway to leave the excavation open or not after completion of the project. The substitute language for this bill adds that no person with a permit to excavate a public highway will be required to leave the site open unless required as a condition of their permit. This language is necessary to ensure that a permit clarifies whether a site is to be left open and reduces the risk of ambiguity.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Adam Grady, Farmer and Regenerative Agriculture Consultant: Mr. Grady expressed support for this bill, however his testimony focused on the benefits of agrivoltaics from his perspective as a regenerative agriculture consultant. Mr. Grady's testimony did not directly mention this bill, or specific reasons for his support.

Peter Myers, Senior Policy Director, Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA): Mr. Myers expressed support for this bill, and detailed that this bill would remove unnecessary regulatory difficulties and improve the project timelines for employers. He noted that broadband deployment supports businesses, especially small businesses which may have fewer resources. He expressed appreciation for the clarification and modernization of the permitting requirements that this bill would provide.

Vincent P. Pace, Assistant General Counsel, Eversource Energy: Mr. Pace expressed support for this bill, given the stipulation that utility companies can continue to coordinate with the municipality or state for co-location of underground utility structures. He also requested that contractors will not back-fill excavation sites before the utility company has a reasonable opportunity to inspect the contractor's work.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Four members of the public submitted anonymous and identical testimony, however their testimony was not in direct response to SB-321.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Elizabeth Gara, Executive Director, Connecticut Water Works Association: Ms. Gara expressed that she had no requested language changes for this bill. She did ask that CWWA be involved in future discussions regarding any changes that would be made to this bill. Ms. Gara expressed that CWWA wants to ensure that this bill would not lead to higher costs for water companies or their customers.

Anna P. Lucey, Executive Vice President of Legislative and External Affairs, New England Connectivity and Telecommunications Association, Inc. (NECTA): Ms. Lucey expressed support on behalf of NECTA, under specific stipulations. Ms. Lucey highlighted the benefits of this bill, which would include increased efficiency of broadband installation. Ms. Lucey requested that an amendment be made which would result in the deletion of section 16-330g in the general statute. Ms. Lucey explained that section 16-330g required by PURA rules adds extra unnecessary permit requirements on top of the permits required from CTDOT. She noted that the CTDOT process and permit requirements work well, but that the PURA permit process detailed in 16-330g creates a duplicative permit process which causes a 30-day delay. Specifically, Ms. Lucey details that 16-330g requires the provider to file an application with PURA, wait for application approval, and wait for 30 days to see if another provider also wants to use that trench to deploy their facilities. Ms. Lucey described that the instances of other providers opting to use the trench in those 30 days is rare, making the statute unnecessary. Ms. Lucey recommends the implementation instead of a law similar to Maine's "Dig-Once" Law, which she attached in her written testimony.

Reported by: Mariah Leslie

Date: 3/27/2025

