
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 335

AN ACT CONCERNING UTILITY CHARGES FOR RESIDENTIAL DWELLING UNITS.

SUMMARY

This bill prohibits residential rental agreements from requiring that tenants pay for utilities if there is no separate meter used to measure utilities delivered exclusively to their dwelling unit. (Existing law also prohibits rental agreements from requiring that tenants pay a heat or utilities surcharge if these costs are otherwise included in the rental agreement.) By law, statutorily prohibited provisions included in a rental agreement are unenforceable.

Existing law additionally makes the owner, agent, lessor, or manager of a residential dwelling (the landlord) liable for the costs of a utility service (specifically, electric, gas, water, or heating fuel) provided to the building, unless the utility company provides the service (1) to a dwelling unit of the building on an individually metered or billed basis and (2) for the exclusive use of the unit's occupants (CGS § 16-262e(c)).

Relatedly, in a recent case the Connecticut Supreme Court held that a landlord could not recoup its utility costs by imposing variable utility payments on individual tenants (see *BACKGROUND – Court Decision on Landlords and Utility Costs*).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026, and applicable to rental agreements entered into or renewed on or after this date.

BACKGROUND

Court Decision on Landlords and Utility Costs

In a 2024 decision, the Connecticut Supreme Court held that a landlord could not recoup its utility costs, from buildings served by a single master meter, by imposing variable utility payments on

individual tenants for their proportional use as calculated by the landlord.

In its decision, the court noted that landlords whose buildings operate with master meters may use the “building in” approach to estimate utility costs for the year and build that figure into monthly rent as part of a rental agreement (*Northland Inv. Corp. v. Pub. Utilities Reg. Auth.*, 349 Conn. 35 (2024)).

Related Bill

sHB 5359, reported favorably by the Housing Committee, prohibits residential rental agreements from including certain other provisions (for example, those that trigger a rent increase if a tenant breaches the rental agreement).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Housing Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 14 Nay 5 (03/10/2026)