

Dear Members of the Energy and Technology Committee and Chairs:

I have been an avid advocate for renewable energy for the last 30 years. My family put in solar panels early on and we have used every possible means to frugally use electricity (and gas and water).

It is upsetting to know that the electric utilities in this state seem to receive Carte Blanche when it comes to rate increases. It is astounding that they have raised rates and done so little to use alternative energy sources. I'm pretty sure they would still like to be using coal to produce electricity if we had not made it economically difficult for them to do so. Other than cutting every tree they saw, they have done little to secure the electrical system during storms. Obviously, based on this latest storm, removing trees was not the solution.

I do not consider Connecticut a "backward" state. We have intelligent residents, educated state employees, but we seem to have a very slow and lumbering utility. They shun competition and actively work against anyone or any organization who wants to use clean energy. When my family put in solar, the UI representative laughed at us (it took 3 months just to get online because UI was so slow) and said that "UI will get what it needs." I was incensed, but since we have little choice and we have a PURA that until now has let most requests from the utilities be approved, there was little I could say.

We need to take back and reign in the public utilities. They are nothing more than thinly veiled profit seeking corporations, who are beholden to their corporate boards and shareholders. I support Senator Blumenthal's suggestions that it is time we acted on behalf of the residents/ratepayers of the state rather than the big corporate utilities.

Sincerely,

-Elaine M Dove
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