

Dear Sen. Needleman, Rep. Arconti and Members of the Energy and Technology Committee:

Thank you for holding this forum and for the opportunity to submit testimony concerning Tropical Storm Isaias Response and Electric Utility Rate Increases. Let's seize this opportunity to summon Connecticut's Yankee ingenuity and act swiftly to enable smaller, nimble utilities that truly prioritize renewable energy, environmental sustainability and customer service rather than exorbitant executive compensation, shareholder returns, and anti-environmental fossil fuels.

I hope we'll make this grossly suboptimal episode in management, storm response, and crisis communications be the tipping point that finally propels Connecticut forward with public utility companies, microgrids, shared solar and wind, and underground lines so we can start preserving the trees we need to consume our carbon pollution and help cool the planet, instead of paying Eversource countless more millions to cut them down.

Below are my remarks submitted to PURA earlier this week:

I'm an Eversource customer from West Hartford who lost power from Tuesday Aug 4 until Saturday Aug 8. I couldn't report my outage through Eversource's app or phone line because the company's tools were not functioning. For two days after the storm, I didn't know one person in West Hartford who had seen any sign of Eversource crews. Now we know why: there weren't any. A decade or so ago, Eversource crews used to be on site to restore lost power very quickly. That's no longer the case, and we can safely guess that it's because of the sharp drop-off in line workers over the years as a way to fund substantial increases in executive compensation.

Worse, Eversource leadership seems unable to manage other storm response logistics. On August 8, I spoke briefly with a crew from New Hampshire and Maine who worked on my street when I went out to thank them. The supervisor said,

**"Every time we come in to help Eversource, it's like it's Eversource's first big storm. Like they haven't handled one before." He also said out-of-state crews were told they were "on their own" as far as finding lodging.**

This crew was in disbelief. They had to stay an hour away in Hadley, Massachusetts. Apparently Connecticut lodging was filled by the time Eversource brought in out-of-state line crews. Eversource didn't plan for this contingency, adding to the inefficiencies of its response.

Further, it was appalling that the Eversource CEO made no public appearances or statements to the customers he serves, and didn't even put his name to the email messages that eventually emerged from "Customer Service." One may conclude that this person has no grasp of the responsibility that accompanies his position.

Eversource's pattern of poor responses hardly merits multi million dollar salaries for the CEO and his executive team. Nor does it merit a guaranteed 7% markup on investments like smart meters, as the [August 24 edition of the Hartford Business Journal](#) states. (And people say CT is bad for business? Not for Eversource!)



Finally, I can tell you that I have cut my household electricity use to 43% of what it was several years ago, yet my Eversource bills are 35% higher. There seems to be a correlation with Eversource executive compensation, and I take issue with that. Some might call that a wealth transfer, or another example of socializing costs and privatizing gains.

Today brings threats of tornadoes, while the devastating Hurricanes Laura and Marco battering the southeast may be marching toward us. Climate change is here, now. I urge you to seize this opportunity to reshape our electric power system for a more sustainable future that truly serves ratepayers and the public.

Thank you for considering these views.

Sincerely,  
Kelly Kennedy  
West Hartford, CT