



TESTIMONY CONCERNING
TROPICAL STORM ISAIAS RESPONSE AND ELECTRIC UTILITY RATE INCREASES
August 26, 2020

To: Honored Chairs Sen. Needleman and Rep. Arconti and Distinguished Members of the Energy and Technology Committee

From: Lori Brown, Connecticut League of Conservation Voters

On behalf of the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters (CTLCV), thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony concerning Tropical Storm Isaias Response and Electric Utility Rate Increases.

For too long, Connecticut's electric grid has been in the hands of fossil fuel interests instead of ratepayers. If we really want to "Take Back the Grid" we need to de-monopolize our utilities and ensure that the interests of other stakeholders are heard. CT must demand that policies and investments of our public utilities align with our state's climate goals.

Fortunately, legislation was being considered by the Energy and Technology Committee before the Covid 19 shutdown that would greatly benefit the "Take Back the Grid" initiative. CTLCV strongly endorses the following provisions as part of this effort:

- **Expand energy storage.** The only way we can increase renewable energy procurement, including offshore wind, solar, hydropower etc. is to expand storage. Without it we will lack the necessary infrastructure to expand renewable energy to meet our goals.
- **Expand the Residential Solar Investment Program (RSIP)** to provide more economical solar options to homeowners and lower the burden on the grid.
- **Keep solar net-metering until 2022.** This will allow PURA to focus on other grid modification efforts instead of a rushed and unnecessary net-metering successor program.
- **Clarify the property tax exemption for solar and storage.** Without this clarification, towns will continue to improperly assess property taxes on residential solar which will hurt the solar market.
- **Repeal the Pipeline Tax.** Connecticut should require legislative approval for all new gas infrastructure to protect consumers from costly, polluting, and unnecessary fossil fuel infrastructure.

We can't allow our utilities to continue to invest in dirty, polluting fossil fuels. We need to put the "public" back in public utilities and ensure that the utility works for the ratepayers, not the other way around. Thank you for your consideration as you deliberate on this legislation.

Sincerely,

Lori Brown, Executive Director
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