

Testimony: Informational Forum on Tropical Storm Isaias Response and Electric  
Utility Rate Increases  
August 27, 2020

To the Members of the Energy and Technology Committee:

We want to add our voice to those who feel strongly that Eversource needs to be held accountable for its poor response in restoring power to our home in the wake of Tropical Storm Isaias. Resulting from widespread tree damage and downed power lines in our Cheshire neighborhood, we were without power for five days, Tuesday when the storm hit until Saturday when power was restored by a crew from Wisconsin.

In this day and age, as we are more reliant than ever on electricity in our homes for essentials in our lives, it is incumbent on the utility provider - in this case Eversource - to ensure that contingency plans and adequate preparation is in place to minimize the time that customers will be out of power. The number of days that we were without power is outrageous and, moreover, reflects on either malfeasance or indifference, or perhaps both, on the part of Eversource. Even though we were out of power for five days, we surprisingly saw an unexplainable increase in our August bill. Clearly, something is not right when a utility that everyone relies on is allowed or enabled to treat its customers so poorly.

We had provided written testimony to last week's PURA meeting and submit this testimony today to our State legislators in hopes that something meaningful and consequential can be done to regulate, monitor, and hold accountable this utility company. In one of Governor Lamont's Press Conferences after this storm, Mr. Lamont had suggested that we take a new approach to how Eversource's services are provided. We would think now is a good time to do so.

During this time of increasingly extreme weather events, it can be reliably predicted that we will be faced with more challenging storms in the not-to-distant future. Let government come together with private industry to resolve their differences in a timely manner rather than wait for the next significant outage and simply repeat the same unsatisfactory response.

Respectfully,

Mary Burnham & John Bestor  
Cheshire, CT