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Written Testimony to the CT Energy and Technology Committee

On Tuesday August 4th we lost power in our home at approximately 2:15 pm due the winds from tropical storm Isaias. Power was restored to our home, a full week later, on Tuesday August 11th, at approximately 4 a.m. This outage constituted the 4th occurrence of power outage lasting a week or more we have suffered since 2011.

It is no surprise to anyone, certainly not Eversource, that tropical storms and occasionally hurricanes hit Connecticut during the storm season, and that they are becoming more severe with the impacts of climate change. Preparedness for such storms must be a mandate to which Eversource assigns the utmost importance – especially given the exclusive right they have been granted to serve most CT residents. We saw no evidence in action or communication that Eversource values their customers or their duty to restore power in a timely manner . We saw no Eversource trucks in our neighborhood until Monday August 10th – a full 6 days after the outage occurred.

From a communication standpoint Eversource's performance and transparency was nothing short of dismal. The online Eversource outage map status was never updated during the entire duration of the outage. It simply said the outage was being evaluated. On Friday August 7th the status remained the same, but the time stamp was updated to indicate our outage started on the 7th at 4:07 a.m. rather than 2:15 pm on August 4th. This caused me to wonder if Eversource was actively managing its outage statistics. To add insult to injury, I received an automated phone message on Thursday August 7th at 10 am from Eversource saying my power would be restored by 4:15 that afternoon – it was not. Eversource might claim it was simply a communication error, but when you are out of power is simply cruel. I did not receive any further message indicating an error had been made. From Friday August 8th I received daily recorded messages with updates saying , among other things, that most customers in my area would be restored by Sunday August 9th, once again, we were not.

Like many CT residents both my main and basement refrigerator and freezer were full given COVID pandemic preparedness. All of my food had to be discarded which I estimate at \$650 in addition to the fact we had to order food out for 3 people for 7 days costing an additional \$700.

My husband, adult son and I all work from home and rely on electricity and access to the internet in order to do our jobs. The weeklong power outage left us scrambling to keep devices charged and find access to the internet and a space to work with air conditioning given the warm temperatures. Productivity for each of us was slashed by at least seventy five percent. In

fact, for the first four days of the outage we also had no cell service which added safety and security concerns to our productivity losses. Given the reality that most workers are working from home for the foreseeable future loss of power for any extended period simply cannot be tolerated. The energy, cell and internet infrastructure throughout the state must be prioritized and vastly improved if Connecticut wants to be a home state of choice workers today and in the future.

I am respectfully asking the Members of the CT Energy and Technology Committee to demand that Eversource reimburse customers for lost food and incremental cost to purchase meals during the outage. In addition, I ask the Committee to create real incentives and penalties for Eversource such that they are compelled to overhaul their preparedness plans, and vastly improve their infrastructure to minimize outages, ability to quickly restore power and to promptly and accurately communicate with its customers. Having seen little evidence Eversource is motivated to improve or maintain service I request the committee put a plan in place to bring competitive energy providers to the state as options for residents. Finally, I believe it is imperative given climate change that Connecticut create and implement an aggressive plan to fully move to renewable energy sources as soon as possible in order to ensure that CT has a sustainable future power infrastructure.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.

Very Kindest Regards,

Patricia