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**State of Connecticut**  
**SENATE**

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**MEMBER**  
**APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**COMMERCE COMMITTEE**  
**PLANNING & DEVELOPEMENT COMMITTEE**

**Senator Heather Somers Testimony**  
**Energy & Technology Committee**  
**August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

Co-chair Needleman, Co-chair Arconti, Ranking Member Formica, Ranking Member Ferraro, and distinguished members of the Energy and Technology Committee:

I am Sen. Heather Somers, and I thank your committee for holding this Informational Forum on Tropical Storm Isaias Response and Electric Utility Rate Increases.

Earlier this month, Eversource management notified investors that it did not expect a “material impact” as a result of Isaias restoration expenses.

Think about that.

Eversource management told its investors that it expects to recover the bulk of storm-related expenses without cutting into profits in any significant amount. The company would not say whether it expects ratepayers to cover the costs.

That’s arrogance. And that arrogance is unacceptable.

I hope your committee considers Eversource’s message to its investors in all of your deliberations on future reform policies.

The southeastern Connecticut ratepayers I represent can not afford these rate hikes.

The southeastern Connecticut ratepayers I represent are angry and frustrated about Eversource’s storm response.

There were multiple failures of communication.

Questions weren’t answered.

Ratepayers were not able to report outages.

The Eversource outage map was at times very inaccurate.

Lives were put at risk.

The ratepayers I represent want answers.

Many of them want to be reimbursed for their spoiled food and medicine.

Many want to know why Eversource’s CEO has not been answering questions.

On their behalf, I am demanding answers and clarity. I join with Senate Minority Leader Len Fasano in asking for accountability and transparency from both Eversource and PURA on Connecticut's current situation.

I urge your committee to help ensure that the downward trend in services and response after Tropical Storm Isaias doesn't become the new normal.

In your deliberations, please be mindful of a Aug. 26 Hartford Courant article which revealed that Eversource's manager for emergency preparedness was aware on the morning of Aug. 4 that potential trouble spots from the storm had doubled from 1,500 to 3,000 to 3,000 to 6000. What did Eversource do with this knowledge? Were additional preparations made? If not, why not?

Connecticut already has some of the highest electric rates in the country. The ratepayers I represent in southeastern Connecticut are overburdened, and they are fed up.

They have spoken out in large numbers to me as their voice at the State Capitol. I have heard them loud and clear.

Thank you to the panel for holding this informational hearing and demanding these answers. Ratepayers deserve answers, accountability, and respect.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather Somers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Heather Somers  
State Senator  
18th District