

Dear Energy Committee:

Tropical storm Isaias has been a painful reminder of how fragile our electric distribution system is and how exposed homeowners and businesses are from being left in the dark. With nearly 900,000 customers left without power at the peak, now is the time to reexamine Connecticut's energy policy to electrify the heating and transportation sectors.

The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the Public Utility Regulatory Authority (PURA) are pursuing a number of initiatives to encourage homes and businesses to convert to electric heat pumps and motorists to drive electric vehicles (EV). If this plan was fully implemented and a storm like the most recent one hit, it would have a devastating impact on families and our economy.

PURA and the electric utilities have failed to protect our infrastructure and control costs, and the power outages that we recently experienced are direct evidence that they are not equipped to handle the electric demand that Connecticut has today, let alone adding 9,000MW of added demand that electric heat pumps and EV's will require.

Putting all of our energy eggs in one basket is a risk that we cannot afford to take. We need to reconsider a one-electric solution fits-all approach and look at a diversification strategy that helps shield us from massive utility failures that will paralyze commerce and jeopardize the health and human safety of our residents.

My company always fulfills the promise of delivering fuel regardless of the weather conditions. In fact, when the power went out during Isaias our industry delivered diesel, gasoline, and propane to tens of thousands of homes to make sure that they have the critical power that they needed when the utilities could not serve them. If DEEP gets its way and is able to electrify everything, companies like mine will not be around to bail out the utilities next time they fail. Therefore, we recommend the following:

Recommendations

? Two weeks ago, our industry asked Governor Lamont to issue an executive order placing an immediate moratorium on all efforts related to electrification until there is an independent review of how DEEP and PURA can ensure that their plans to electrify the economy are not subject to future catastrophic power outages. This review should include diversifying our energy mix to ensure that we are not dependent on one source of energy. Please support our call for this action before the utilities fail again.

? Encourage DEEP to adopt lower cost alternatives like a thermal renewable energy credit program that includes biodiesel as prescribed in Public Act 19-35. This program can lower electric costs and supports local businesses. Please contact DEEP and tell them to put the brakes on electrification efforts and to work with our industry to create a Thermal Portfolio Standards that includes biodiesel.

? Connecticut also needs to allow PURA to once again be an independent agency that is responsible for overseeing our public utilities. As a subagency of DEEP, PURA does not have the autonomy that it needs to make decisions that are in the best interest of ratepayers. DEEP's energy policy initiatives need to be counterbalanced with PURA's ability to protect against uneconomic investments that drive up costs to consumers. This conflict in mission needs to be resolved to protect ratepayers.

? Since PURA approved the electric rate increase, it makes no sense to have them investigate why rates went up - they approved it so they should know. An independent third party should investigate

the utilities to ensure that the rate increase was legitimate and they should also review PURA to verify that their oversight of the utilities storm response and rate increase was prudent and appropriate.

? Urge the Governor to immediately appoint a permanent Consumer Counsel. It has been about a year that ratepayers have gone without the chief watchdog to protect them from uneconomic investments and higher rates. This position is vital in protecting consumers from a very complex and overly bureaucratic regulatory environment that is impossible for the average person to figure out. Its unacceptable to have such an important position vacant for this long.

These recommendations help ensure that our economy is not crippled when the power goes out in the future and helps control costs. Connecticut cannot afford for millions of homes, businesses, and vehicles to literally be shut off because we subsidized electric technologies that don't work when electric utilities fail.

Now is the time to avoid the electrify everything mistake that will not be able to be undone once it is fully implemented.

For more information please contact my trade association representative Chris Herb at chris@ctema.com or 860-613-2041.

Sincerely,

SUSAN Santopietro
Watertown, CT 06795-1650