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

From: Denise Savageau
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Re: TESTIMONY CONCERNING LCO 3920: AN ACT CONCERNING EMERGENCY RESPONSE BY
ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES AND REVISING THE REGULATION OF OTHER PUBLIC
UTILITIES

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important bill on energy utilities and resiliency in Connecticut. This is important legislation that is greatly needed to address critical issues facing our state.

I support testimony provided by several environmental groups including the CT League of Conservation Voters and the Greenwich Tree Conservancy. As an environmental professional with over 30 years working at the state, regional, and municipal level in Connecticut, I offer the following additional comments for your consideration.

1. Thank you for including Water Utilities in your legislation. I suggest that PURA should, not may, initiate a similar performance-based program for water utilities. The nexus between energy, water, and food supply is well documented. Water conservation, both in terms of quality and quantity, must be a consideration when developing energy programs. Additionally, water conservation often translates into energy conservation, the more water we conserve, the less energy needed to distribute clean water or treat wastewater.
2. A modern grid that includes a balance of centralized and distributed generation (DG) clean energy sources is needed for resiliency. Unfortunately, DG has not been embraced by the PURA and the utilities. The legislation calling for pilot project has been under-utilized. One of the reasons is that utility distributors see DG as "energy generation" and use that as an excuse for not whole-heartedly assisting with DG. As such, the potential for DG with battery storage has not gained support. This means that Connecticut is not actively supporting a modern grid that includes micro-grids using DG with storage.

This avoidance of DG needs to change especially in our cities, where there are numerous opportunities to utilize DG. Instead of placing large-scale solar on farm or forest land, reducing the carbon sequestration value of both, we need to look at our rooftop real estate. Large scale DG solar in cities not only brings the energy closest to where it is needed, it also has the potential to reduce heat island effects. This legislation provides the opportunity to direct CT DEEP, PURA, and the utilities to fully embrace a modern grid with DG and not continue down with the current centralized generation model. PURA and the Siting Council should be required to look at DG as an alternative to any proposed distribution project. Additionally, it should be made clear that clean energy funds managed by the utilities can be used for DG in addition to energy conservation, and that the utilities can assist municipalities plan for micro-grids using DG. As the name implies, DG is both distribution and generation.

Sincerely,

