



August 11, 2020

Governor Ned Lamont

State Capitol

210 Capitol Avenue

Hartford, CT 06106

Governor Lamont:

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.

Putting all of our energy eggs in one basket is a risk that we can not 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.

We request that you 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.

We also request that the state look at **prohibiting monopolies, who are given a privileged position where they are shielded from competition and guaranteed a profit, from being publicly traded**. As publicly traded companies our electric and natural gas utilities are rewarded by maximizing shareholders profits, which seems to be at cross purpose with serving their customers. Investor-owned utilities like

Eversource are beholden to their shareholders' interests, not the interests of ratepayers and that needs to change.

Finally, Connecticut 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.

These recommendations help ensure that our economy is not crippled when the power goes out in the future. 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.

I am available to discuss these recommendations and how the 600 local owned energy marketers and 1,400 motor fuels retailers can help Connecticut with its energy needs.

Respectfully,

Christian A. Herb

President