



November 16, 2021

Governor Ned Lamont

State Capitol

210 Capitol Avenue

Hartford, CT 06106

Governor Lamont:

On August 11, 2020, I wrote you to ask that you issue an executive order placing a “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.”

I am writing you again, just fifteen months later, urging you do the same thing.

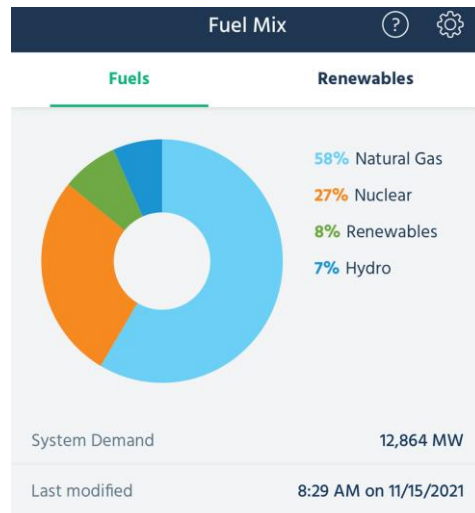
The time to act is now.

At your [November 5, 2021 press conference](#), you articulated your concerns about keeping the lights on this winter. The people of Connecticut need more than the advanced notice you provided them about potentially losing power and heat; they need action! You stated that: **“Severe weather could make matters worse, by driving up demand for natural gas, which in turn could compromise the reliability of the region’s electricity grid.”** Since you agree that inadequate natural gas supply may compromise the electric grid, now is the time to do something about it.

Electric grid operator [ISO-New England has made it clear that gas reliability is an issue](#): “During the last few years, **inadequate infrastructure to transport natural gas has at times affected the ability of natural-gas-fired plants to get the fuel they need to perform. This fuel-security risk has become a pressing concern in New England, considering the major role natural-gas-fired generation plays in keeping the lights on and setting prices for wholesale electricity.**”

The use of natural gas for electric generation has increased from about 15% in 2000 to nearly 60% today in New England. The ill-advised policy of “putting all one’s energy eggs into one basket” makes utilities particularly vulnerable to gas supply reliability, and pricing. ISO New England goes on to address fuel security, saying: “The region’s fuel-security risk has been evident to the ISO since a 2004 cold snap when

more than 6,000 MW of natural-gas-fired generation was unavailable, due to pipeline constraints, economic outages, and operational issues. Similar challenges have continued to crop up during cold spells in recent winters, including the most recent one in late December 2017 and early January 2018. Because the reliability of the power system was maintained throughout these events, the region’s electricity consumers have been shielded from this growing risk, apart from severe price spikes some winters that eventually showed up in retail rates. **However, there is a real risk that the region’s fuel-security risk could worsen to the point that the ISO would be required to take more severe emergency actions to keep the lights on and protect the power grid during winter. These actions could include public pleas for electricity conservation, voltage reductions (brownouts)—and, as a last resort, load shedding (rolling blackouts).”**



Source: ISO-NE

I also wrote your predecessor about these concerns (see attached letter 1/27/14) where I requested that Governor Malloy place a moratorium on natural gas conversion until interstate pipeline capacity could meet the overly ambitious goals in the Comprehensive Energy Strategy (CES) that sought to convert 280,000 homes to gas. Specifically, we asked that he “issue an executive order to avert any system wide failures that would negatively impact the state economy and the ability to keep people warm, and we urge you to act quickly so that the proper assurance are given about system reliability”.

When I wrote you last summer, [Newport County in Rhode Island recently experienced low natural gas pressure, and then Governor Gina Raimondo](#) had to declare a state of emergency for the 7,100 households and families that lost heat in frigid zero-degree temperatures. As ISO-New England warns, this is just a harbinger of things to come.

Connecticut policies promoting the conversion of homes heated with heating oil/Bioheat fuel and propane to natural gas puts at risk our electric grid and the ability to keep people warm. It is counter-intuitive to expect such conversion policies would not affect electric generation as feared by ISO-New England during peak winter months and it needs to stop now.

With a new state law ([PA 21-181](#)) that requires the use of low carbon renewable liquid fuel, there is no reason to continue the natural gas conversion plan from an environmental standpoint, let alone energy security.

I once again ask that you use your executive powers to halt all efforts to promote natural gas and electric heat pump conversions until all reliability issues have been addressed. The current electrification efforts and natural gas conversion policy endanger public welfare and can be avoided if you act now.

I am available to discuss this recommendation and how the 600 locally family owned energy marketers and 1,400 motor fuels retailers can help Connecticut with its energy needs.

Respectfully,

Christian A. Herb

President