



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF MARISSA GILLETT
FEBRUARY 17, 2025

To: Honorable Co-Chairs Sen. Looney and Rep. Concepcion, and Distinguished Members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee

From: Lori Brown, Executive Director, CT League of Conservation Voters

The CT League of Conservation Voters works with environmental and clean energy groups across the state to advance policies that protect our land, air, water, and climate.

CTLCV urges you to **vote YES** on Chair Marissa Gillett's reconfirmation to PURA. Her leadership has kept utilities accountable, protected ratepayers, and advanced Connecticut's clean energy goals. It is imperative that Chair Gillett continue to serve in this role so she can continue her exceptionally effective work.

Marissa Gillett is not only a leader in Connecticut, she is also nationally recognized for both her expertise and her willingness to push back against utilities and ensure communities benefit from energy efficiency. Other states are looking to Connecticut as a good example of a regulatory environment when it comes to ratepayers.

Since she was appointed in 2019, Marissa Gillett has worked to hold utility companies accountable exactly as the legislature has directed PURA to do. She has consistently followed the letter of the law and balanced interests.

This includes enforcing the provisions of "Take Back Our Grid Act" that the legislature passed to protect consumers by denying expenses that were being added to their electric bills by the utilities, such as lobbying and corporate perks.

In every state in the U.S., regulators are supposed to keep inappropriate charges out of prices. Without rigorous legislation and determined enforcement by PURA, the burden falls on consumer advocacy groups to identify and challenge expenses.

Despite the law, the utilities have repeatedly attempted to recover these costs. Just last year, PURA denied \$555,000 in industry dues, travel and meal expenses, and investor relations costs that the utility Avangrid attempted to pass along to customers during a gas rate case last year.

Since then, the utilities have conducted a public smear campaign against Chair Gillett, using every tool, connection, lawyer, and public platform at their disposal to get her out of their way.

This is not just happening in CT. There is an effort across the nation by utilities to dismantle and weaken regulatory authorities in other states.

Utilities have always had an outsized voice on energy policy in our state and they are used to getting their way. The utilities should earn a fair return on their investment, but **we can't let the utilities determine how they are regulated.**

We are asking all the members of the Executive & Legislative Nominations committee to stand up against this effort to oust the only defender of the public that we can count on to keep our utilities in check.

In an era where the federal government is trying to roll back consumer protections and give free reign to the fossil fuel industry across the nation, state laws and regulators are the only defense.

Chair Gillett is the tip of the spear nationally and the whole industry is watching to see who is ultimately in charge - the people's regulators, or the utilities.

A vote for Marissa Gillet is a vote for the people over corporate profits. We urge you to vote in the best interest of your constituents and confirm her nomination.

Thank you for considering these comments.

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