

PROTECTING ELECTRIC CONSUMERS

This year, the legislature took steps to protect electric ratepayers. Now, when UI or Eversource propose to increase rates, the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) must hold at least two public hearings, which will allow consumers to speak directly with regulators. Connecticut residents are also now protected from electricity providers who offer very low introductory rates that rapidly increase by these new requirements:

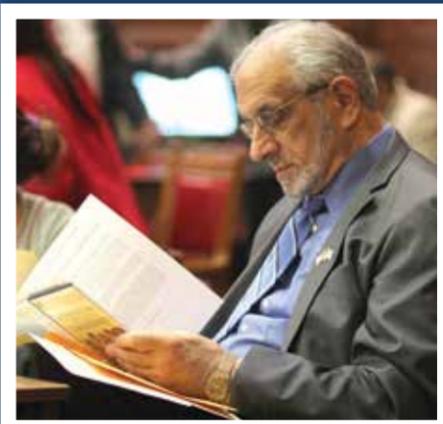
- Competitive electric suppliers must give customers a 60-day notice of the end of their contracts.
- Competitive electric suppliers cannot charge a termination or early cancellation fee and must allow customers who want to switch to standard service the ability to do so within 72 hours.
- A process will be established for PURA to further investigate and take measures to completely eliminate variable electric rates when a customer's contract expires.

AFFORDABLE AND RELIABLE ENERGY

We need to continue to procure affordable and reliable energy in accordance with our renewable energy goals. This year we allowed the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) commissioner to solicit long-term contracts for various energy resources, including: wind, solar, biogas, fuel cells, waste heat recovery, and natural gas, among others. The DEEP commissioner may select one or more suitable proposals and direct the electric companies to enter into long-term contracts. Agreements are subject to PURA's approval. The bill limits all contract terms to 20 years and puts other limitations on the size and scope of proposals.



Rep. Esposito and Rep. Dargan sharing information on a bill.



Rep. Esposito reviews legislation before the General Assembly.



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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Thank you for your support. It has been an honor to represent you in the General Assembly for another term. There have been many intensely debated issues this legislative session and it has been a privilege to represent the people of West Haven and New Haven in all of these discussions.

Connecticut's economy continues to recover and looking back at the 2015 legislative session I am proud of the steps the legislature took to grow our state's economy.

We have continued to make important investments in Connecticut's Small Business Express Program, which has succeeded in helping to grow our small business community. The property tax burden has also remained a primary concern for many small businesses, and thankfully we worked to increase municipal aid in order to ease property taxes.

We have also made historic investments in our transportation system and increased Education Cost Sharing (ECS) funding for many cities and towns. These investments are critical to growing our economy as businesses will not come to Connecticut if their employees cannot get to work in a safe and timely manner and if we do not have an educated workforce ready to fill 21st century jobs.

I hope you find this information to be of use and please do not hesitate to call my office if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



BETTER LABELING ON PRESCRIPTION BOTTLES

To better protect and inform consumers we are now requiring that pharmacists include with generic drugs the manufacturer's name, the website and telephone number for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's drug safety and reporting program (MedWatch). If the patient is being given a generic drug, the pharmacist must include the brand name on the label. This will help to ensure that patients are aware of what drugs they are taking, where these drugs come from and where to report adverse effects of the drugs.



HELP FOR OUR VETERANS

This year, the legislature supported and advanced legislation that recognizes the important sacrifices that veterans have made while defending our country. We have established the Women Veterans Program to help better connect female veterans to services, and the Veterans to Agriculture Program to give tax credits to vets working in agricultural production.

PROTECTING SUSPECTED ELDERLY ABUSE VICTIMS



This year we also focused on protecting our seniors from elder abuse. In situations where abuse or neglect of an elderly person is suspected, the Department of Social Services is now able to petition a probate court to gain access to that person's premises to make an assessment. For the purpose of DSS investigations and services, the definition of neglect is also expanded to include elderly people who do not live alone but whose caretaker fails to provide or arrange to provide for services necessary to maintain the physical and mental health of the elderly person. To protect residents of nursing homes, the Department of Social Services must notify a resident's designee or legal guardian of any suspected

abuse, neglect, exploitation or abandonment within 24 hours of receiving notice from a medical provider or other mandated reporter.

SECURITY FREEZES ON CHILDREN'S CREDIT REPORTS

Child identity theft is an increasing problem. Currently, Connecticut parents are not able to freeze the credit of their children. Parents will now be able to freeze their child's credit, protecting them from potential financial harm. When a child's credit is frozen, it is impossible to take out lines of credit in their name. Once a child is no longer a minor, their credit will be automatically unfrozen.



BIG NEWS IN COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY

Student loan debt is an issue that impacts many Connecticut families. Sixty-four percent of college graduates in our state have student loan debt. This year, the legislature took several steps to address the increasing cost of higher education:

STUDENT LOAN BILL OF RIGHTS

Connecticut became the first state in the nation to create a Student Loan Bill of Rights, which establishes an Office of the Student Loan Ombudsman. This office will: regulate student loan servicers, compile data on borrower complaints, develop a financial literacy education course for students, and will help student borrowers and their parents navigate the loan process.

SIGNIFICANT STUDENT LOAN RATE CUT

In an historic step toward increasing college affordability, the Connecticut Higher Education Supplemental Loan Authority (CHESLA) has announced that it will offer its lowest fixed interest rate yet at 4.95%, down from its current rate of 6.75%. This rate is also significantly lower than the upcoming Federal PLUS loan rate of 6.84%.