



## OCC Staff Members Testify Before Legislative Committees

The Legislative session is in full swing, and the Consumer Counsel and other members of OCC have been busy preparing testimony on a wide variety of bills before multiple committees. The OCC submits written testimony on proposals, and staff members also appear in person to testify as well. Consumer Counsel Elin Swanson Katz testified before the General Assembly's Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee on March 4, 2013, concerning the need for significant consumer protections in a proposal to auction off standard service electric customers to the highest bidder contained in Senate Bill 843. She also testified before various proposals before the Energy and Technology Committee on March 5 and 7.

William Vallee, one of OCC's most experienced attorneys, testified:

- **in opposition to RB 6402 AAC *Modernizing The State's Telecommunications Law*** before the Energy & Technology Committee on February 21, 2013, which is promoted by the state's two telephone companies seeking to deregulate and allow them to actually terminate the provision of their most basic services.
- **in favor of Senator Beth Bye's S.B. No. 657 AAC *Consumer Protection Of Cable Television And Video Service Customers***, intended to provide greater consumer protection for customers of cable television and video service.
- **in favor of Governor's Bill No. 847, AAC *The Commission For Technology Advancement***, before the Joint Committee on Planning And Development, which revises C.G.S. Section 4d-80 to create a Commission For Technology Advancement and names the OCC as a member of the public and private entities comprising the new Committee. The OCC wholeheartedly endorses its mission and hopes to use its expertise in broadband issues to boost both access to and adoption of broadband services across the state. The new Commission will focus the state's efforts on broadband as a potent force in education, healthcare, public safety, and e-government functions, while promoting business development, high technology strategies, and jobs creation.

A complete list of OCC testimony can be found here [<http://www.ct.gov/occ/cwp/view.asp?a=1419&q=271336>]. The OCC will continue to work with legislators on the development of legislation throughout the legislative session, both through formal testimony and in subsequent discussions on bill language after formal testimony has been submitted, always coming back to the question, "What's best for consumers?"