

The Energy and Technology Committee

March 6, 2007

Senate Bill 1373: AAC Electric Rate Relief

Testimony of The Office of Consumer Counsel

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The Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) supports in principle many of the creative and positive ideas for providing short- and long-term relief from the devastating electric price increases recently contained in **Senate Bill 1373: AAC Electric Rate Relief**.

The OCC has been quite active in urging the General Assembly to restore the revenues that were intended for electric conservation funds and the state's Clean Energy Fund, but which were diverted into the General Fund. The OCC therefore fully supports Sections 23 and 24 of SB-1373 and sincerely hopes the General Assembly will embrace the restoration and full funding of these vital funds. In addition, the OCC would highlight and support the bill's proposal to empower the Energy Conservation Management Board to develop a "Connecticut energy excellence plan" to take energy efficiency to the next level and position Connecticut as an even stronger national leader in energy efficiency.

Similarly, the OCC supports Section 26 calling for a thorough evaluation of electric baseload generation, a concept that OCC has also long promoted: the need for broad-based and in-depth planning for energy needs for all consumer sectors of the state, residential and business, alike.

The OCC supports the concepts of time-of-use rates and real-time pricing in the effort to send important price signals on cost of energy to consumers and has been an active party in DPUC Docket 05-10-03, *Application Of The Connecticut Light And Power Company To Implement Time-Of-Use, Interruptible Or Load Response And Seasonal Rates*. Having said that, OCC would like to further explore and discuss our concerns regarding time frames and cost versus benefits related to advanced metering. While it is clearly in the interest of all consumers to move load to less expensive off-peak times of day, the OCC remains cautious about impacts of this proposal as currently structured on certain customers, such as seniors and low-income and others who may not be able to shift load easily.

There are many other parts of this complex 43-page bill that OCC will continue to review and consider in the context of our mission as the

utility ratepayer advocate, such as the sections relating to electric retail choice and utility transmission assets. We look forward to working with the Committee and other participants in the effort to reduce electric prices and volatility for all Connecticut consumers in a cost effective manner.