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# OCC NEWSLETTER

Official Newsletter of the Connecticut Office of Consumer Counsel

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JULY 2024

# OCC NEWSLETTER

Connecticut Office of Consumer Counsel



## A note from Consumer Counsel Claire Coleman

Affordability for essential services like electricity, water, and internet are top of mind as we head into the hot days of summer. As I write this note, our state is experiencing a heat wave, reminding us of the growing need not just for heating assistance, but also for cooling assistance for financially struggling families. In February, I had the privilege of returning to Washington, D.C. for two important events supporting energy equity: the [LIHEAP Action Day 2024](#), hosted by the National Energy & Utility Affordability Coalition to lobby members of Congress for increased funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), and the [U.S. Department of Energy-National Lab Equity Summit: Grid Planning and Operations](#). Unfortunately, federal funding for energy, water, and internet assistance seems to be on the decline, instead of the needed incline. Congress failed to reenact the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) and let the critical Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) sunset. The health, safety, and economic vitality of our communities rely on having access to affordable, reliable energy, water, and internet. We will keep pushing to advance affordability and equitable access to these services for all Connecticut consumers.

The increasingly frequent summer storms and heatwaves we've already experienced also call to attention the importance of a reliable electric grid and internet infrastructure. The Office of Consumer Counsel ("OCC") represents Connecticut ratepayers on the advisory group to [ISO New England](#), our regional grid operator, to help ensure strategic and cost-effective regional grid planning and energy markets, as well as the dependable flow of electricity. We also stay in close contact with Eversource and UI during weather events and outages, to promote a coordinated response to these challenges that prioritizes the well-being and safety of Connecticut residents, as well as the quality and reliability of these critical services.

My team and I at the OCC never lose sight of the importance of the life-essential products and services that are delivered by our utilities and internet service providers, which is what makes our oversight and advocacy role so important. Please stay safe this summer and reach out and let us know how we can continue to best serve ratepayers.

Sincerely,  
Claire Coleman



## Electric Bill Changes – United Illuminating and Eversource Customers Will Likely See Increase in Monthly Bills in July 2024

Effective July 1, 2024, customers of Eversource and United Illuminating using an average of 700 kWh per month can expect to see an increase in their monthly electric bill by approximately \$8 and \$1.64 respectively. This increase is a combination of a decrease in Standard Service supply rates and an increase in distribution rates (company expenses necessary for, or related to, providing electric services). The delivery rate increases were approved in the annual Rate Adjustment Mechanism Proceedings for both companies after a lengthy proceeding in which the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) issued an interim decision for both [Eversource](#) and [UI](#) on April 17, 2024.

### New Standard Service Rates Effective July 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024

**EVERSOURCE:** \$0.8995 per kWh  
**UNITED ILLUMINATING:** \$0.119101 per kWh

- For **UI**, those collective increases of roughly \$356 million, which would have amounted to an approximate increase of \$34 per monthly bill, are offset by the decreased Standard Service rate. As a result, the average residential customer using 700 kWh per month will experience an approximate \$1.36 increase per month.
- For **Eversource**, those collective increases of roughly \$920 million, which would have amounted to an approximate increase of \$44 per monthly bill, are offset by the decreased Standard Service rate. As a result, the average residential customers using 700 kWh per month will experience an approximate \$8 increase per month. More information regarding these adjustments can be found on [OCC's website](#).

## Important Advisory to Customers of Third-Party Suppliers!

Customers on competitive third-party supply offers that began in the first half of 2024 might have been paying less than customers that remained on Standard Service supply and might have already experienced reductions in the “supply” portion of their bills. Unfortunately, this means that customers with third-party suppliers will not experience the decrease in the standard service rate to offset the distribution rate increases, and will likely see a larger bill increase than those customers on Standard Service.

OCC strongly encourages customers with a third-party supplier to review their

contract as soon as possible to ensure that they are paying no more than the Standard Service offer for their electricity – customers can terminate their third-party supplier contract at any time and revert back to Standard Service.

For more information see [OCC's Consumer Alert!](#)

**Customers using a third-party supplier may see parts of their bill increase monthly by as much as...**

Eversource: \$47  
United Illuminating: \$34



# 2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION RECAP

Though only a short legislative session, OCC proposed, monitored, and helped shape several proposals, bringing consumer perspectives to the table and keeping utility affordability, grid reliability, and issues involving the clean energy transition top of mind for elected officials across the state.

## Prioritizing Water Affordability

As Chair of the newly named Low-Income Energy and Water Advisory Board last summer, Consumer Counsel Coleman, along with fellow advocates and Board members, led the effort to pass [Public Act No. 24-37](#), which broadens the scope of the Board's purview to include water service and utilities. The Board is responsible for providing recommendations to improve the availability, administration, and implementation of heating and water assistance programs, by optimizing current energy assistance and efficiency programs as well as water conservation and affordability efforts.

The impact of adding water services to the Board's mission means that Connecticut has additional focus on addressing water affordability, and the necessary infrastructure in place should the federal government permanently enact the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP). Created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, this emergency program aimed to restore water services, prevent service disconnections and provide rate reductions to families in need. Through the American Rescue Plan and the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, Congress authorized \$1.1 billion in emergency funding to assist households struggling to afford their water bills. With the assistance of LIEAB, Connecticut was able to leverage the state's existing Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program infrastructure and through strong working partnerships with our

water utilities, set up a program to distribute funding from the federal program.

While the program was scheduled to sunset June 2024, the Administration of Children and Families (ACF) recently issued [a report](#) citing the ongoing need to address water affordability nationwide as the national average residential water bill has increased by nearly 50% since 2010. LIHWAP has illuminated the ongoing financial, socioeconomic, and health costs of water and wastewater in the United States, while making strides to improve access to affordable water for all. We know there is more work to be done to achieve long-term water affordability, these legislative changes align the Board's current and ongoing work with enabling language giving the Board clear authority to advocate for water affordability.

In addition to adding water as a core focus, the Board is now also responsible for submitting a biennial report, beginning by October 15, 2024, with a set of recommendations to the Joint Committees of Cognizance: Energy and Technology, Appropriations, and Human Services committees. As we know, the more information we have, the better – and with the growing concern about the cost of essential utility services, having updated and recurring information on the state of play for our low-income communities and most vulnerable residents is a necessity.



# 2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION RECAP

## Strengthening MDC Consumer Advocate Statute

Connecticut has regional and municipal utility districts not regulated by PURA, the body that oversees the operations and ratemaking proceedings of Connecticut's investor-owned utility companies. As a result of 2017 legislation, (PA 17-4 and PA 17-1), OCC is responsible for selecting the Independent Consumer Advocate for both the Connecticut Municipal Electric Energy Cooperative ("CMEEC") and the Metropolitan District Commission of Hartford County ("MDC") that looks out for the best interests of consumers of these unregulated utility districts.

OCC has currently had two individuals serve as the MDC Consumer Advocate since the enactment of PA 17-4, and upon issuing a notice looking for application for the 2024-2025 two-year term, OCC had difficulty finding qualified applicants due to the narrow and overly prescriptive position parameters of the original statute. Because of this, OCC sought common-sense and pro-consumer updates as proposed in Senate Bill No. 336 An Act Concerning the Consumer Advocate of Metropolitan District of Hartford County. The changes appropriately align the compensation for

the amount of work and commitment the position requires and expands the scope of professional experience in order to widen the applicant pool and attract passionate candidates who may not have otherwise met the narrow qualifications.

As fellow advocates, we understand the work is varied, complicated and time consuming. It includes attending numerous district board meetings, reviewing all budgetary and procedural documentation, responding to, researching, and working toward a resolution for individual customer complaints within the 12 towns MDC serves, coordinating and communicating with MDC personnel, preparing quarterly reports, as well as participating in quarterly status report calls with the OCC. This piece of legislation was [passed and signed into law](#) by Governor Lamont on June 4, 2024.

Since the Public Act was enacted, OCC has issued an updated job posting for the MDC Consumer Advocate position and is still accepting applications. More information can be found [here](#), or by emailing [Veronica.Maas@ct.gov](mailto:Veronica.Maas@ct.gov).



# Legislative Homework for 2025

## Solar Customer Consumer Protections

In line with many of the pro-consumer provisions of [Public Act No. 24-38](#), this legislation coming out of the Energy & Technology committee created a task force to review existing practices and make recommendations on policy, regulations and future legislation to improve disclosure requirements and consumer protections for consumers who enter into solar contracts. During its review the group is tasked with focusing on low-income consumers and whether additional or special protections are necessary to ensure they receive the benefits of solar at reasonable costs and are not victims of deceptive practices.

The task force must issue its findings to the Energy & Technology committee on or before January 1, 2025. Keep an eye out for a link to our findings in the next OCC newsletter issue!

## Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) Working Group

[Public Act No. 24-145](#), which was passed out of the Human Services Committee, tasks the Department of Social Services to convene a working group, of which the OCC is a member, to establish new pricing standards for fuel vendors participating in the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program in order to fairly compensate vendors but maximize the financial benefit to qualified recipients who meet the program guidelines and parameters. Additionally, the law directs the Department of Social Services to study the feasibility of creating a common application and benefits portal for use when consumers are applying for both CEAP benefits through DSS and heating assistance through Operation Fuel, Inc. – a Hartford based non-profit.

In order to complete this task by January 1, 2025, DSS must work in consultation with the newly named Low-Income Energy and Water Advisory Board, of which, Consumer Counsel Coleman is the sitting Chair. For more information on the findings of the working group and the updated application, stay tuned for the next issue of OCC's newsletter.



## Legislative Homework for 2025 (continued)

### Connecticut Siting Council: Reviewing Current Practices and Procedures

As a result of [Public Act No. 24-144](#), several changes were made to the Connecticut Siting Council, the statewide body for siting energy and telecommunications infrastructure. Among the provisions is a requirement that the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) conduct a study of the Siting Council's current structure and procedures in consultation with several state agencies, including OCC. OCC looks forward to actively engaging with DEEP throughout this study, and additionally, to help ensure that financial impact is being adequately considered by the Council as it reviews transmission applications, as contemplated by other provisions in P.A. 24-144.



### OCC Obtains Expert Analysis on [Impacts of Electricity Generation Regulatory Structures on Connecticut Ratepayers](#)

Connecticut's electricity supply is restructured, which means that regulated utilities generally do not own power generation resources. In response to higher and more volatile electricity supply pricing in Connecticut, some stakeholders have suggested moving back toward a vertically integrated utility regulatory framework in which utilities would once again own at least some generation resources.

The OCC partnered with experts at Synapse Energy Economics to study the consumer impact of Connecticut's energy framework after the turn-of-the century deregulation of the energy supply markets, and the possible impact of reverting to a vertically integrated system, as well as exploring other alternative reforms that could potentially lower costs and improve price stability.

Synapse's December 2023 report, "Impacts of Electricity Generation Regulatory Structures on Connecticut Ratepayers," found that there are risks

and benefits to consumers in both restructured and vertically integrated systems. They identified three key evaluation metrics: average cost, price stability and state policy implications.

Energy prices have historically been lower under vertically integrated frameworks compared to restructured frameworks, though there is significant cost to reacquiring generation assets and a risk of construction and operation inefficiencies. Restructured frameworks are more prone to market-based price volatility, though this can be mitigated through long-term power purchase agreements. Under vertical integration, state regulators may also have more direct oversight of the generation resource mix. Synapse recommended against reverting back to full vertical integration but identified opportunities to improve the existing restructured regulatory framework through anticipated regional wholesale market reforms and improvements to standard service procurement. To read the report, click [here](#).

# OCC Recommends End to Unrestricted Third-Party Wage Garnishment Practices

The Office of Consumer Counsel conducted a Working Group to evaluate the practice of wage garnishment as a utility debt collection practice. On June 27, 2024, OCC produced a [final report](#) highlighting key findings and recommendations.

## ***How did this working group come about?***

Historically, some Connecticut public service companies (regulated electric, gas, and water companies) have filed civil court actions against customers carrying large unpaid balances on their accounts.

In some cases, when customers have not repaid those balances after a court has ordered them to do so, the companies have asked the court to order the customer's employer to withhold portions of the customer's paycheck for the purpose of paying down the debt. This debt collection process is called **wage garnishment**.

OCC initiated an investigation into this issue, specifically in the context of PURA's orders associated with the COVID-19 moratorium on service disconnections and payment plans, within [Docket No. 22-03-16](#), which ultimately resulted in PURA's direction to form this Working Group.

## ***What were the goals of the working group?***

The goals of the Working Group were to evaluate the use of wage garnishments as a bill collections tool, including

- (1)** the social impacts of wage garnishments on residential customers, particularly low-income customers;
- (2)** the cost to Eversource and Avangrid of pursuing wage garnishments, and
- (3)** the use of wage garnishments by utilities in other jurisdictions.

## ***What were some of the key takeaways from this working group?***

Through this working group, OCC collaborated with a diverse set of stakeholders to develop a better understanding of wage garnishment, its role in diminishing utility debt, and its costs—among these, the underlying social impacts to affected customers.

As detailed in [OCC's final report](#), OCC recognizes that there is a tradeoff between the need for individual protections and the burden on ratepayers to cross-subsidize uncollectible expenses. After conducting internal research and engaging with stakeholders, OCC determined that the potential financial benefits of wage garnishment revenues are trivial as compared to the significant potential social costs imposed upon those who are directly affected by the practice, and that at most, wage garnishments should only continue in narrow circumstances where the utility can demonstrate that the customer clearly has the financial means to pay their bills, and no other health or safety reason preventing such payment.

OCC therefore recommended that if wage garnishments are to continue being used by the Companies as a collections tool, 1) additional notification requirements should be instituted in order to promote greater fairness; 2) that any wage garnishments allowed to continue should be subject to a review process under PURA's Education, Outreach and Enforcement (EOE) Division whereby the Company presents evidence of the customer's ability to pay without undue burden or hardship and of the Company's efforts to obtain payment from the customer via other means.

## OCC's Approach to Performance-Based Ratemaking

We continue to engage in PURA's investigation into Performance-Based Regulation, or "PBR". PURA started its general investigation in the winter of 2022 and we collectively have made a lot of progress over the years to refine focus into three areas: considering adjustments to the overall framework for utility rate cases (Docket [21-05-15RE01](#)); designing specific tools to create incentives for particular performance outcomes (Docket [21-05-15RE02](#)); and addressing the distribution system planning practices of the utilities (Docket [21-05-15RE03](#)).

OCC has been a significant participant and contributor to these proceedings. We filed an initial overview of our positions in the RE01 docket [last fall](#), and have continued to engage in the conversation – our most recent filing [was in May](#). We filed an overview of our proposals in the RE02 docket [last winter](#), and our most recent [filing in April](#). Here are a just a few examples of ways OCC recommends tracking utility practices with scorecards aimed to evaluate and improve utility performance and customer outcomes:

- **Avoided Service Termination Scorecard** – To track outcomes where utilities have avoided service disconnections by enrolling customers in payment plans;
- **Peak Demand Scorecard** – As the peak demand shifts over time with the implementation of distributed energy resources and evolving customer usage, this will track changes over time in order to facilitate efficiencies in distribution system planning and usage.
- **Customer Satisfaction Scorecard** – Data from customer surveys and the companies' internal metrics can provide greater insight into areas where companies might increase their customer service focus.
- **Cost Efficiency Scorecard** – Monitoring the companies' spending as categorized by the areas where they derive profits may help to identify incentive adjustments to better reflect the needs and expectations of ratepayers.
- **Power Restoration After Major Events Metric** – Tracking more granular information about restoration time and outage experiences among socioeconomic demographics can ensure that storm response standards are equitable and effective.

PURA is holding in-person roundtable discussions between all stakeholders to further refine those concepts. For more information on how to join these discussions, please email [pura.information@ct.gov](mailto:pura.information@ct.gov). All three PBR dockets [are expected to continue](#) until the summer of 2025.

# OCC Advocacy in the Connecticut Water Rate Case Helps Achieve Pro-Consumer Outcome

In October, Connecticut Water filed an application with PURA seeking to increase rates by over 18% - a total annual revenue increase of over \$20 million. OCC evaluated the application, filed expert testimony, issued many interrogatory requests and cross-examined company witnesses across eight full days of evidentiary hearings. We ultimately advocated for a more reasonable rate adjustment that will protect consumers from unnecessary spending but would ensure that the company would continue to provide

reliable access to clean water. We also recommended the Authority open a general proceeding applicable to all regulated water companies to ensure they are prepared to address PFAS contamination and other water quality issues. We filed our [brief](#) in March and PURA issued its [final decision](#) in June, incorporating many of our arguments. We are proud of this balanced and positive outcome for Connecticut Water customers.

## OCC's Focus on Equity

OCC understands the essential role that equity plays in consumer advocacy, and we are committed to continue working towards equitable policies and outcomes on behalf of Connecticut consumers.

Learn more about some of the ways OCC is centering equity below!



### LIHEAP ACTION DAY 2024

The OCC participated in LIHEAP Action Day, hosted by the National Energy & Utility Affordability Coalition (NEUAC), in DC to advocate for increased funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

LIHEAP (also known as "CEAP" in Connecticut) can help families with their energy costs.



## OCC's Focus on Equity



## AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM (ACP) ADVOCACY

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), a federal program that helped families and households struggling to afford internet service get and stay connected, unfortunately ended earlier this year.

The OCC consistently advocated for this program, joining efforts with some of our state representatives and other key stakeholders. We will continue to push to advance affordable and equitable internet access.



## ENERGY TRANSITION SUMMIT

As a panelist at DOE-LAB's Equity Summit in DC, Consumer Counsel Coleman shared Connecticut's successes, and discussed potential challenges, on the path towards achieving long-term energy equity and affordability.



Consumer Counsel Coleman moderated the "Constructing Connecticut 2035" panel discussion at CTBILT's CONSTRUCT Infrastructure Summit.

This discussion focused on the vision for our state's future and what we can achieve through Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding and by centering equity and resilience in new projects.

## WAGE GARNISHMENT

As explored earlier in this newsletter, the OCC produced a report to evaluate the use of wage garnishment as a bill collections tool. We understand that the financial impacts of garnishment on those impacted, as well as the procedural injustices often associated with the practice more broadly, are not evenly distributed.

We hope this report and our recommendations provide a helpful study of garnishment and serve as a starting point for integrating equity into the conversation.

## GET INVOLVED!

Public participation is critical to making sure the government works effectively for the people it serves. The OCC and PURA want to hear from you!

Visit [PURA's site](#) to learn more about the different ways you can get involved, from participating in a public hearing to submitting written comment for a rate case. Your comments can help us advocate for issues important to consumers, like affordability and quality of service.

# OCC Investigates Frontier's Failure to Abide by Quality of Service Standards

On January 8, 2024, OCC petitioned the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority to investigate and enforce the minimum Quality of Service Standards ("QoSS") required of Frontier (The Southern New England Telephone Company) set forth in Connecticut [General Statutes 16-247g-2](#). OCC's [petition](#) illustrated, per the company's own semi-annual reports from January 1, 2015 to June 30, 2023, that Frontier failed to meet the mandatory minimum QoSS for completing maintenance appointments and for repairing out of service ("OOS") telephone lines within 24 hours as follows:

- For the Maintenance standard, on average across the entire state, Frontier was noncompliant 30 out of 96 months, which is 31% of the time.
- For the OOS Repaired standard, on average across the entire state, Frontier was noncompliant 44 out of 96 months, which is 46% of the time.
- In the Capitol region, Frontier fell below the Maintenance standard 37 out of 96 months, or 39%, which is more than one-third of the time. Also in the Capitol region, Frontier failed to meet their OOS Repaired standard 48 out of 96 months, or 50% of the time.

PURA opened Docket No. 24-01-15 on January 30, 2024 and both PURA and OCC issued interrogatories to determine the full scope of Frontier's noncompliance. Frontier's responses raised additional concerns about lapses in their reporting, such as twenty towns which were not included in the semi-annual reports. Frontier has yet to issue either corrected semi-annual reports or amended interrogatory responses to explain where the Quality of Service data is for these towns.

On July 10, 2024, PURA issued a Final Decision and subsequent [Notice of Violation](#), that confirmed OCC's findings and proposes to levy civil penalties against Frontier Communications. As evidenced by Frontier's own semi-annual reporting, they failed to meet the minimum Maintenance Appointment Met (MAM) standard for 35 months and the minimum Out of Service Repair (OSR) standard for 51 months, from January 2015 to December 2023. In addition, Frontier also failed to file 16 required exception reports for 3-month periods in which Frontier failed to meet the minimum standards, and those reports were, cumulatively, 8,811 days overdue as of December 31, 2023. In accordance with powers afforded to PURA in Connecticut General Statutes, PURA is proposing a collective \$2,481,000 in civil penalties for the aggregated violations.

"Connecticut's laws and regulations exist to protect families, individuals and businesses from situations that put them at risk.

When an investor-owned public service company is permitted to provide service using the critical infrastructure along our streets and highways – and fails to meet these standards, it is not only detrimental to the public's safety but a breach of this regulatory compact.

As the office with the statutory role to protect consumers of Connecticut's communications companies, I am proud of the work my team did in identifying Frontier's failure to provide service at the level consumers deserve. It's because of that work PURA was able to deliver today's decision and issue fair but meaningful penalties."

-Consumer Counsel Coleman  
on PURA's final decision in  
Docket No. 24-01-15

# OCC's Role in Safeguarding and Securing the Open Internet



On April 25, 2024, the Federal Communications Commission voted to reclassify broadband Internet Access Service (“BIAS”) as a Title II telecommunications service in order to enact stronger consumer protections and advance public safety. The OCC’s Office of State Broadband (“OSB”) was an active participant in this proceeding and [filed joint comments](#), alongside the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA), supporting the change and advocating for stronger state oversight of telecommunications services. The collective suggestions in the joint filing included:

- Providing states with the authority to require affordability programs and low-income service tiers for customers;
- Maintaining state utility commission authority to ensure that updates to infrastructure in the public streets and highways are performed safely and efficiently;
- Allowing for increased data privacy and security for all consumers by ensuring providers are cooperative with state cybersecurity and network resiliency efforts;
- Establishing clear, straightforward rules to prevent BIAS providers from engaging in practices harmful to consumers, competition and public safety, and subsequently, penalties enforced by state regulators for failure to meet these standards;
- Allowing states to continue to do their own broadband mapping, which is used for many localized purposes other than those of federal broadband maps; and

- Rectifying regulatory uncertainty regarding jurisdiction and other harmful consequences of the 2017 reclassification. Without clear state directives and authority, many utility commissions declined to process consumer complaints on telecommunications, cable and internet service (non-rate) issues, though those services were provided through facilities located in public rights-of-way with state authorization. Allowing states that choose to take consumer complaints will better facilitate resolution between consumers and service providers in a prompt and meaningful way.

Prior to this decision, a change made by the FCC in 2017 reversed the classification from “telecommunications services” to “information services,” resulting in decreased oversight at every regulatory level. This April decision restores BIAS services to its proper classification under federal law, which provides the FCC with authority to enact consumer protections for broadband users, such as net neutrality rules.

The FCC's rules are scheduled to take effect July 22, 2024. However, an appeal, filed by Trade Associations for the industry, is currently being considered by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in Cincinnati to stay the FCC’s rules by July 15 and reject the FCC's motion to move the case to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit in Washington, D.C.

# OCC IN THE NEWS

## WORK ON ELECTRICITY RATES & BILLS

In 4-3 Split, Divided Connecticut High Court Rules on Utilities Billing

- Emily Cousins
- May 7, 2024

What drives electric rate changes in Connecticut? 'A confluence of issues'

- Jordan Nathaniel Fenster
- Jan. 2, 2024

State Officials Praise PURA's Draft Decision To Reduce Connecticut Water's Rate Hike Request

- Julie Martin Banks
- May 31, 2024

Officials rip Eversource, UI: 'Connecticut deserves better'

- Luther Turmelle
- Feb. 17, 2024

## TELECOM CONSUMER PROTECTIONS

PURA fines Frontier \$2.48M for repeatedly failing to meet performance requirements

- Andrew Larson
- July 11, 2024

Office of Consumer Counsel files petition for PURA to investigate Frontier

- Ellie Stamp
- Jan. 9, 2024



## ENERGY EQUITY AND AFFORDABILITY ADVOCACY

With Utility Shutoffs Returning May 2, State's Consumer Counsel Warns Residents of Scams

- Julie Martin Banks
- April 12, 2024

CT lawmakers, Lamont add \$17 million to winter heating assistance

- Keith M. Phaneuf and Mark Pazniokas
- February 14, 2024

CT bill that would allow utilities to disconnect severely ill patients for non-payment advances

- Vincent Gabrielle
- April 1, 2024

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Legislative Update 2024 with Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff and Consumer Counsel Claire Coleman

- Nutmeg TV
- April 10, 2024



Coffee & Tea with AARP Connecticut

- AARP CT
- July 11, 2024

STAY CONNECTED WITH THE OCC





# ABOUT THE OCC

The Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) is an independent state agency with statutory responsibility to represent customers of Connecticut's regulated utilities – electric, gas, water, and telecommunications providers – primarily in matters that go before the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA). The OCC is authorized to participate on behalf of consumer interests in all administrative and judicial forums and in any matters in which the interests of consumers with respect to public utility matters may be involved.

OCC's core mission is to advance the interests of Connecticut's utility customers with a goal of achieving affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy services and improving utility company performance to best meet the needs of consumers. This includes cost-effectively achieving the state's clean energy targets, environmental and greenhouse gas reduction goals, and environmental justice and equity priorities. OCC is also committed to achieving universal access to high-speed affordable broadband connections for all its residents. We help improve Connecticut residents' access to essential services that are critical to health, safety, and economic well-being of our state.

The Office consists of attorneys, accountants, financial analysts, and support staff. Together, OCC pursues its core mission through strategic litigation, policy development, research and data analysis, and engagement with regulators and policymakers, the legislature, the public, and other key stakeholders.