



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
NEWS RELEASE

Consumer Counsel Elin Swanson Katz

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**OFFICE OF CONSUMER COUNSEL SUPPORTS DRAFT DECISION
IN STORM INVESTIGATION DOCKET, BUT PUSHES FOR ADDITIONAL
FINDINGS ON TOWN LIAISONS, OUTAGE ESTIMATES, AND OTHER
ISSUES**

(July 23, 2012 -New Britain, CT) - The Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) today filed its Written Exceptions to the Draft Decision issued by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) in Docket Number 11-09-09, *PURA Investigation into the Public Service Companies' Response to the 2011 Storms*.

The OCC supports PURA's finding that the Connecticut Light and Power Company's (CL&P) response to the 2011 Storms (Tropical Storm Irene and the October Nor'Easter snowstorm) was deficient and inadequate in several respects, and OCC is pleased to see that PURA is considering sanctions in future dockets. OCC also supports the specific improvements PURA has ordered for providers of wireline service restoration, including that AT&T and Verizon conduct, and report on, annual live emergency drills for their Connecticut operations.

The OCC seeks more specific orders on other aspects of storm response, however, including improvements to CL&P's town liaison program, a vital link between the utilities and Connecticut's municipalities. The OCC also requests that PURA find that CL&P's much-touted estimate that 99% of customers would have their power restored by midnight on Sunday, November 6, 2011, was erroneous, unreasonable, and harmful. The public's continued reliance on the 99% by midnight November 6 deadline caused hardship for many Connecticut towns, residents, and businesses that made decisions about shelters, schools, travel, and business openings based on that incorrect deadline.

Consumer Counsel Elin Swanson Katz stated, "We are very pleased to see PURA's extensive findings and orders with respect to storm response. Connecticut's citizens need to know that the State has recognized the hardships many of us suffered during the two storms and is taking concrete steps to improve future storm response. We would also like to see some specific findings, especially with respect to CL&P's 99% restoration

estimates, and orders for specific improvements to the town liaison program. Overall, the draft represents a very positive step forward for Connecticut.”

PURA’s final decision in the proceeding is expected on August 1st.

The complete text of the OCC’s Written Exceptions can be found at <http://www.dpuc.state.ct.us/DOCKCURR.NSF/60903cc7b9de44728525746b006e8ffb/da9abfd70b5ef36b85257a4400591f43?OpenDocument&scrollTop=4876>

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The Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) is the State of Connecticut’s advocate for all utility ratepayers. OCC seeks to ensure just and reasonable rates and reliable utility service for customers of Connecticut’s electric, gas, telephone, and water utilities and reasonable protection for cable television customers. For more information, visit www.ct.gov/occ.