

# Housing Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No:** SB-335 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT CONCERNING UTILITY CHARGES FOR RESIDENTIAL DWELLING

**Title:** UNITS.

**Vote Date:** 3/10/2026

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 3/3/2026

**File No.:**

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Housing Committee

### REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill seeks to eliminate unfair utility fees applied to a tenant's rent if no separate meter is used to measure the utilities delivered to a tenant's dwelling. As a result of loopholes in Connecticut's landlord-tenant law, tenants currently can be subject to separate utility charges when there is single meter for a building with multiple dwellings. The fee assessed is often not reflective of their actual utility consumption. This bill aims to protect tenants and increase transparency for applicable utility fees.

### SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

The substitute language provides language clarification. It clarifies that any utilities that are billed to the tenant cannot be charged as a part of rent if the individual meter does not measure utilities that are going to the tenant's unit.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

**Office of Consumer Counsel, Claire Coleman, Consumer Counsel** supports the bill because it will ensure uniformity across landlord-tenant and utility statutes and codify the Connecticut Supreme Court's decision in *Northland Investment Corp. v Public Utilities Regulatory Authority*. This decision held that landlords are prohibited from recovering building wide utility costs by estimating the share of costs among individual tenants via billing practices that are inconsistent with exclusive use metering. Respectfully requested that an amendment be made to clarify the definition of "separate meter" and to protect tenants subject to "mixed wiring."

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

**Connecticut General Assembly, Martin Looney, President Pro Tempore** supports the bill, underscoring that he has heard from constituents whose landlords have charged tenants for utilities by splitting the cost equally amongst all tenants regardless of conservation efforts.

These individuals submitted similar testimony in support of the bill with an amendment. The amendment would allow for older buildings with common area lighting on a single meter to be exempt, if this arrangement is disclosed on the lease, as the cost to rewire is too expensive. Paul Januszewski also respectfully requests that the bill be amended to specify that “sewer fees” constitute utilities and that a fee for these services should only be assessed if there is a utility company water meter serves only that tenant’s dwelling:

**Connecticut Coalition of Property Owners, John Souza, President**

**Dan Saunders**

**Greater Enfield Landlords Association, Paul Januszewski, President**

**Connecticut Legal Services, Inc., Raphael Podolsky, Attorney and Policy Advocate**

supports the bill, but requests an amendment to specify that the service must go exclusively to tenant-controlled areas.

**CT Fair Housing Center, Chelsea Connery, Attorney** supports the bill, noting that it will codify the decision in *Northland Investment Corp. v Public Utilities Regulatory Authority* and prevent cases of ratio utility billing by reinforcing existing tenant protections under statute.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

These individuals submitted similar testimony opposing the bill. They believe that the installation of meters is impractical for many older buildings which are not designed for individual metering or would prove too costly to retrofit. Heckman added that landlords will have few options but to pass the cost of utility upgrades on to the individual tenants who will be subject to higher base rents if they cannot recuperate losses through a utility fee:

**Connecticut Realtors, Jim Heckman, General Counsel**

**LeadingAge CT, Mag Morelli, President**

**Adam Bonoff, Business Owner** opposes the bill, stating that utilities should be split without the need for a meter.

**Reported by: Kyle Zingler**

**Date: 03/20/2026**