

Questions for the Public Utility Regulatory Authority Nominee

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Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA)

PURA's commissioners are appointed by the governor with the legislature's advice and consent.

PURA regulates the rates and services of investor-owned utility companies, like Eversource, United Illuminating, Southern Connecticut Gas Company, and CT Water. Among other things, it also licenses the state's retail electric suppliers and conducts various studies and investigations into utility-related issues.

PURA is administratively within the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) but is funded through a charge paid by the companies it regulates.

Questions

1. Tell us about your past experience working in the field of energy and utility regulation. How will that experience shape how you approach your work as PURA commissioner? Are there any viewpoints or approaches you took in your previous work that you think you will have to be particularly aware of when acting as an impartial PURA commissioner? Are there any circumstances that you foresee having to recuse yourself from a PURA proceeding?
2. PURA's most high-profile decisions tend to be on electric distribution company rates. How well do you understand the process by which PURA comes to these decisions? Are there any changes to this process that you might recommend? How important is reaching consensus with the other PURA commissioners when making a decision?
3. In 2020, the legislature passed [PA 20-5](#), also known as the "Take Back Our Grid Act," which among other things, required PURA to develop a framework for performance-based

regulation. What is your understanding of the law's requirements and where PURA's development process currently stands? How will your particular expertise or perspective contribute to the ongoing development process for performance-based regulation.

4. For the first time since 2011, PURA will have five utility commissioners, rather than three. How do you think this will affect PURA's deliberative process and decisions?
5. With utility rate affordability becoming a significant public issue over the past year, how heavily will you consider rate affordability as a factor when deciding PURA rate cases? What other factors might you have to consider and are there any that could outweigh affordability as a factor?
6. Over the past several years, PURA increased its efforts to explain its work to the public through newsletters, videos, and "PURA 101" presentations, among other initiatives. How important is it for the public to understand PURA's work and should the authority be doing more or less to engage the public? What role does public participation play in PURA proceedings and can an average person participate meaningfully in a proceeding? To what extent should PURA consider public opinion when making its decisions?
7. Gas and electric utilities have alleged that an unstable regulatory environment and rate case decisions that were unfavorable to them have led to credit downgrades that will make utility work more expensive in the future and ultimately negatively impact ratepayers. Are they wrong?
8. The state's renewable energy policies include (1) clean energy tariffs, which allow customers to benefit from on-site renewable energy; (2) energy procurements conducted by DEEP to provide stable funding for renewable projects; and (3) the renewable portfolio standard, which obliges utilities and suppliers to get a certain amount of their power from renewable sources. PURA's role in these policies varies, but how does the authority balance support for these programs in line with the state's energy strategies and carbon emissions goals with the ratepayer impact of providing this support?
9. Over the past year, PURA has been involved in several public controversies. How closely have you been following these issues? How might you have handled these issues if you had been a commissioner at the time? What changes has PURA made, or will you be advocating for, going forward?

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