

3/1/2021

Tree Wardens Association of Connecticut  
P.O. Box 602  
60 Church Street  
Wallingford CT. 06492

Energy and Technology Committee

Raised Bill No. 950

To Whom it May Concern,

On behalf of the Tree Wardens Association of Connecticut, I would like to offer comment on Raised Bill No. 950; " An Act Concerning the Replacement of Public Utility Poles and Revising Vegetation Management in Utility Protection Zones". This bill contradicts the intent of CGS Sec. 23-59 that offers protection of property to abutting property owners from the discretion of the utility companies. As part of their proposal, the bill calls for the repeal of Sec. 3. Subsection (e) and removes the ability of the property owner to object to pruning or removal. Additionally, in the "Statement of Purpose", the bill states that the only intention is to satisfy time restraints and expedite the removal process.

It is apparent that due to the utilities recently being denied by PURA the ability to circumvent the removal procedure through the Targeted Risk Management Program, they are looking for a new method to deny property owners their right to a voice.

Presently, Municipal Tree Wardens act as a representative of the Towns and residents that they serve. They are often needed to act as an intermediary between the utility companies and the property owners and must not be excluded from the process as a matter of convenience. Qualified Tree Wardens are professionals in their field and have extensive education in the protection, maintenance, and care of the urban forest. It is important for all concerned that the checks and balances put in place by the legislature be preserved while we work to maintain roadside character, protect property values, and preserve quality of life through the benefits that trees provide. The Tree Wardens Association of Connecticut would like to offer these comments in opposition to Bill 950.

Thank you,  
Kevin J. Kelly  
President  
Tree Wardens Association of Ct.