Date Filed: August 13, 2026

Witness: David L. Gladey and Jeffrey Richard
Request from: Office of Consumer Counsel

Question:

(Pole) Under condition no. 7 of the final decision in Docket No. 20-04-31, The Southern New England Telephone Company d/b/a Frontier Communications of Connecticut (SNET) Bankruptcy Proceeding and Change of Control, PURA stated that "Frontier and SNET shall continue to negotiate in good faith with the EDCs regarding mutually agreed upon terms for the transfer of ownership interest in jointly owned utility poles to the EDCs and submit semiannually reports to the Authority regarding the status of such negotiations by June 30 and December 31 of each year. If two consecutive status reports are submitted that reveal no significant progress, the Authority will consider assigning a mediation team from its Office of Education, Outreach, and Enforcement." Please answer the following:

a. Please describe chronologically since 2001 Eversource's efforts to engage with Frontier/SNET concerning the possible transfer of the ownership interest of Frontier/SNET in jointly owned utility poles to Eversource.
b. Please state the terms and conditions that Eversource proposed to Frontier/SNET for Eversource to acquire the full ownership of the now jointly owned utility poles.
c. Did Frontier/SNET make an offer for Eversource to acquire the full ownership of the now jointly owned utility poles?
d. Since Verizon acquired Frontier in January 2026, have there been any communications or discussions between Verizon/Frontier/SNET and Eversource concerning the transfer of all utility pole ownership to Eversource?
e. In their latest compliance filing to PURA in accordance with condition no. 7 in the Docket No. 20-04-31, submitted on June 29, 2026, Frontier/SNET represented the following: "Frontier had engaged in good faith negotiations with the EDCs regarding mutually agreed upon terms for the transfer of ownership interest in jointly owned utility poles to the EDCs. Frontier previously provided both Eversource and UI with requested financial data relating to Frontier's ownership interest in the poles at issue and a proposed term sheet. Frontier has previously requested feedback on the term sheet provided by Frontier and no further discussions have taken place." (i) Please confirm the accuracy of this statement as written:(ii) If Eversource takes issue with any portion of the Frontier/SNET statement, please explain Eversource's position with any such portion of the Frontier/SNET statement; and (iii) if the "term sheet" was provided by Frontier, please provide a copy of such term sheet.
f. Would Eversource be willing to engage with Verizon, which now owns Frontier/SNET, on Eversource's acquisition of the Frontier/SNET interest in each utility pole that is currently jointly owned by Eversource and Frontier/SNET? Please elaborate.

g. If Eversource were to become a single pole owner for those poles that are currently jointly owned with Verizon/Frontier/SNET, what efficiencies could inure to Eversource as the result of being both the SPA and the single pole owner.

Response:

a. Eversource last reached out to Frontier/SNET to obtain copies of the most recent draft term sheet and updated financials on January 31, 2024, and Frontier/SNET provided copies of the requested documents to Eversource on February 8, 2024. Due to the pressures caused by the Connecticut regulatory environment over this time period, this effort could not be pursued in a productive or consistent manger.

b.&c. Order No. 7 of PURA's February 3, 2021, Final Decision in Docket No. 20-04-31 is directed at Frontier/SNET, which, consistent with this order, provided a term sheet and financials to Eversource in connection with the potential transfer of all utility pole ownership interest to Eversource. Please refer to OCC-185, Attachment 1 CONFIDENTIAL, for a copy of the term sheet.

d. There have not been any post-acquisition communications or discussions between Verizon and Eversource regarding the transfer of all utility pole ownership interest to Eversource. Importantly, there is no legal requirement for Eversource to purchase Frontier/SNET's pole inventory, nor does PURA have the authority to require such acquisition. Order No. 7 required "good faith" negotiations "regarding mutually agreed upon terms for the transfer of ownership interest in jointly owned utility poles." In good faith, Eversource reached out to Frontier/SNET in January 2024 and Frontier/SNET responded promptly with the information, which CL&P has evaluated and considered. The issue is not that the parties are not acting in good faith. Instead, acquisition of the Frontier/SNET pole inventory would have shifted full responsibility for costs and maintenance to CL&P customers. Although the Company views such an acquisition to have the potential to enable efficiencies, the additional costs and responsibilities for CL&P customers that would inevitably occur also need to be considered. For this reason, Eversource has not yet reached a point of determining that this is a "mutually agreeable" course of action for CL&P customers.

e. Eversource cannot confirm the accuracy of the statement with respect to Frontier/SNET. Frontier/SNET did provide a term sheet and financials to Eversource in connection with the potential transfer of all utility pole ownership interest to Eversource. Please refer to OCC-185, Attachment 1 CONFIDENTIAL, for a copy of the term sheet.

f. Eversource would be willing to engage in a discussion with Verizon on a potential purchase of the Frontier/SNET interest in poles jointly owned between the companies.

g. If Eversource were to become the sole owner of utility poles that are currently jointly owned with Frontier/Verizon, potential efficiencies could include more direct decision making regarding pole maintenance and replacement activities,; reduced administrative coordination; simplified billing and financial administration; improved consistency of asset records; and reduced intercompany coordination related to construction and pole replacement activities. Potential benefits to attachers could include simplified administrative processes and reduced billing touchpoints where separate transactions are currently required between multiple pole owners.

However, sole pole ownership is not the only factor to achieve efficiency within the third-party attachment space. For example, Eversource is still the expert of the electric space and Verizon is the expert of the communication space.

In addition, sole ownership could result in Eversource assuming additional ownership, operational, maintenance, inspection, or emergency response cost and responsibilities that are currently shared or performed by another entity (and not borne in their entirety by CL&P customers). Accordingly, the nature and extent of any operational efficiencies would depend on the final ownership structure, applicable regulatory requirements and the allocation of responsibilities established as part of any future transaction.