Dear Members of the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority,

I am writing to strongly oppose Eversource's proposed rate increase and to urge you to consider its potentially devastating impact on Connecticut's small businesses.

My daughter and I operate a bakery business with three locations in Connecticut. We have worked hard to build our business, provide jobs, and serve our communities. But like many small business owners, **we are struggling to stay afloat.**

Our electricity bills alone average nearly $1,900 per month—more than $22,000 annually. Add to that the relentless increases in ingredients, labor, insurance, rent, taxes, and other operating expenses, and the financial pressure becomes overwhelming. We cannot simply continue raising our prices when our customers are also struggling to make ends meet.

For us, another substantial utility increase isn't simply an inconvenience. It could be the final blow that forces us to close our doors.

What makes this especially frustrating is the disconnect between the repeated promises of affordability from Connecticut's state leaders and the reality facing those of us trying to operate businesses here. Affordability cannot remain a campaign talking point while the cost of living and doing business continues to climb.

Eversource is seeking approximately $727 million in additional annual distribution revenue, with provisions for further adjustments over a four-year period. At what point do we recognize that businesses and consumers simply cannot absorb these continual increases?

We recognize the need for reliable electrical infrastructure, but that responsibility must be balanced against the ability of customers to pay. **Small businesses cannot continue to be treated as an unlimited source of revenue.**

I urge PURA to reject or substantially reduce this proposed increase, rigorously scrutinize Eversource's expenditures, and consider the cumulative financial burden being placed on Connecticut's small businesses.

Connecticut cannot claim to champion affordability and small business growth while allowing the essential costs of operating those businesses to become increasingly unsustainable.

Behind every rate increase are real people, real jobs, and real businesses fighting to survive. Please do not make it harder for us to keep our doors open.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ruth Harvey

Taste by Spellbound
220 West Main Street - Avon, CT