

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Joshua Schauer 271-3077

HB 1577, relative to the disclosure of utility customer data to municipalities for emergency response planning.

Hearing Date: April 21, 2026

Time Opened: 11:19 a.m.

Time Closed: 11:29 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Avard, Pearl, Watters and Rosenwald

Members of the Committee Absent : Senator McConkey

Bill Analysis: This bill allows public utilities to share individual customer data with municipal emergency management authorities for the limited purpose of emergency response planning and coordination.

Sponsors:

Rep. Drye
Rep. Girard

Rep. Tenczar
Rep. Bridle

Rep. Foote
Rep. Roy

Who supports the bill: Representative Drye (Sull. 7), Representative Aron (Sull. 4)

Who opposes the bill: Angelique Hall

Who is neutral on the bill: Griffin Roberge (Eversource)

Summary of testimony presented:

Representative Margaret Drye, Sullivan 7

- Rep. Drye stated this legislation came about through a public meeting with Eversource. From that meeting she was made aware of customer concerns over power being shut off to people who are on life support at home.
- She explained that utilities hold a list of customers who have verified health needs that require that electricity be supplied at all times. There was a concern that emergency services did not have access to the list.
- She explained that the proposed legislation would allow a local emergency management director to access that list for the purpose of emergency response planning.
- She explained that they worked to make sure that the information on the list

- was still private and could not be accessed in a 91: A, right to know request.
- She explained that in periods of extended power outages it's critical that medical workers are able to identify patients that rely on life support. Giving emergency response planners access to the list that utilities hold would allow them to respond quickly in emergency situations.

Senator Avard asked what the trigger point for someone being checked on was.

Rep. Drye responded that utilities get a document signed by a customer's doctor saying that they are on life support.

Senator Avard asked what they do with that information.

Rep. Drye stated that it just stipulates that they won't turn off the power to a house with someone who is on life support.

Senator Avard asked what happens during a power outage.

Rep. Drye explained that during an outage, emergency medical personnel have to find and assist those people that rely on power. She emphasized that having a list of people reduces the time to get to a house and allows those people to be prioritized during a power emergency.

Senator Rosenwald asked how the utilities would know if a person was on life support or needed supplemental oxygen.

Rep. Drye explained that it would be a conversation between the utilities and the person on life support. She deferred any technical questions about that process to the utilities.

Griffin Roberge, Eversource

- Mr. Roberge stated that Eversource was neutral on the proposed legislation. He offered an amendment to the legislation that would clarify some of the language. He stated that Eversource appreciates the intent of the bill and explained that "medically coded customers" are customers that provide medical proof that they cannot have their power turned off for medical reasons.
- He explained that this legislation would not give them an expedited power restoration. He went on to say the legislation would allow utilities to disclose medically coded customer information to emergency services in times of major outages.
- He briefly explained that under Eversource's current practices they use "municipal hubs" as points of contact. The amendment that they provided would change the point of contact from "local emergency management directors" to "municipality's authorized public safety official." This would better align with the "municipal hub" practice that Eversource employs now.

- He stated that “local emergency management directors” does not currently exist in statute and the amended language would provide the municipality more flexibility in choosing who the point of contact would be.

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Date Hearing Report completed: April 23, 2026