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Testimony in Support of
Proposed House Bill No.5181

*AN ACT EXEMPTING
CERTAIN FACILITIES FROM THE NATURAL GAS DEMAND USE CHARGE*

Energy and Technology Committee
Public Hearing
February 21, 2019
Legislative Office Building, Room 1B

The Connecticut Catholic Public Affairs Conference, the public policy office of Connecticut's Catholic Bishops, supports Proposed House Bill No. 5181, *AN ACT EXEMPTING CERTAIN FACILITIES FROM THE NATURAL GAS DEMAND USE CHARGE*.

Presently, many of our churches and their attached church halls, which operate on the charitable donations of parishioners, must pay commercial demand fees. These halls and churches open their doors for religious and charitable events, such as clothing and food drives for needy families. Other churches operate soup kitchens. Demand fees make offering these services more difficult by increasing overhead costs.

We kindly suggest that this bill be limited to non-profit, religious organizations, and that the restrictions on the number of days or hours the buildings are in use be removed. Many of our churches offer daily masses and funeral masses several times per week, but for limited periods of time. Additionally, and equally important, the Conference objects to churches and other places of worship being categorized as commercial facilities by utility companies.

Anne LaMonica, Associate Director for Education