
Murphy Calls on Energy Committee to Help Home Heating Oil Users in Energy Reform Bill

As the House Energy and Commerce Committee crafts its landmark energy and climate change legislation, Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) wrote to Energy and Committee Chairman Henry Waxman (CA-30) and Energy and Environment Subcommittee Chairman Ed Markey (MA-7) to ask that Connecticut consumers who use home heating oil are allowed to participate in energy efficiency programs intended to cut emissions and save consumers money on their home heating bills.

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Contact: Kristen Bossi

(202) 225-4476

WASHINGTON, D.C. - As the House Energy and Commerce Committee crafts its landmark energy and climate change legislation, Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) wrote to Energy and Committee Chairman Henry Waxman (CA-30) and Energy and Environment Subcommittee Chairman Ed Markey (MA-7) to ask that Connecticut consumers who use home heating oil are allowed to participate in energy efficiency programs intended to cut emissions and save consumers money on their home heating bills.

"Connecticut's reliance on home heating oil is unique in the nation, and we need the energy reform bill to recognize the cost we are bearing to heat our homes. In the coming weeks, I am going to work with Chairman Waxman and Chairman Markey to make sure that Connecticut's home heating oil users get access to every bit of savings available in the energy bill," said Murphy, who is the only Member from Connecticut on the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

According to the Independent Connecticut Petroleum Association (ICPA), there are some 682,000 consumers of heating oil who use 545 million gallons of heating oil annually in Connecticut. Traditionally, however, national energy efficiency programs have focused primarily on usage of natural gas and electricity, energy sources which are widely-regulated at the state level. However, a broad array of unregulated fuels used in cooling and heating homes and buildings are often ignored in such programs. These fuels include home heating oil, distillate fuel, kerosene, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG or propane), residual fuel, and wood.

In order to assist consumers of fuels not currently reached by many existing energy efficiency programs, Murphy encouraged the Committee to consider allocating revenues to states to develop cost-effective energy efficiency programs that target unregulated fuel users. The reach of such a program would extend well beyond fuel-dependent states in the Northeast, including industrial and rural areas with unique fuel consumption profiles.

"By partnering with various entities, we continually reduce the high cost of heat for our most vulnerable residents. Although programs currently exist, the need far outweighs our current resources. Additional programs for conservation

services can and will provide more households in Connecticut the necessary relief to the ever-increasing cost of fuel," said Dr. James H. Gatling, President and CEO of New Opportunities, Inc.

The energy and climate change legislation currently being developed will provide funds for both state and federal programs to assist consumers with weatherization and energy efficiency improvements. Funding will be generated from the sale of emissions permits purchased by polluters, a system Connecticut already participates in as part of a regional greenhouse gas-capping regime.

"This bill is going to revolutionize the way we use energy in this country. Energy efficiency upgrades, no matter what fuel source they conserve, will be crucial to the future of our economy and our planet. Home heating oil users cannot be left behind in this transformation," said Murphy.

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