



**State of Connecticut**  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

**REPRESENTATIVE MARY M. MUSHINSKY**  
EIGHTY-FIFTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
ROOM 4038  
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591  
HOME: (203) 269-8378  
CAPITOL: (860) 240-8585  
TOLL FREE: 1-800-842-8267  
FAX: (860) 240-0067  
E-MAIL: Mary.Mushinsky@cga.ct.gov

**RANKING MEMBER**  
PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS  
COMMITTEE

**MEMBER**  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE  
FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

**Testimony of Rep. Mary Mushinsky Regarding RB 5787, An Act Concerning  
Connecticut's Economic, Energy and Climate Security  
Before the Energy and Technology Committee  
Public Hearing Tuesday, March 07, 2008 9:00 a.m.**

Thank you for raising this bill. It is long past time for the state to re-institute a Department of Energy, and to achieve independence, efficiency and reduction of climate change emissions, we should upgrade to a Department of Clean Energy. Oil is now \$104./barrel, and OPEC has said this week they have no plans to increase supply. Fully 50% of the state's residents heat with oil. When I last purchased oil for my family in February, it was \$3.89/gallon, more than \$1 per gallon increase over last year. Although I live in a small house and we have insulated it extensively, the heating bill is still \$350/month.

Any family or business in CT faces an insurmountable hurdle as energy prices continue to rise. Energy prices will make food, transportation, housing, and education more unaffordable, and squeeze families and businesses until they cannot live in the state. New England's economy, more than any other region of the U.S., is tied to fuel oil. As fuel oil rises in price, New England (and Connecticut) will decline economically in comparison to other regions. If we postpone action on this issue, we place our state, communities, residents and businesses at great risk.

Raised bill 5787 would establish the Department of Clean Energy as a successor to the renewable Energy Investments Board. The Department would administer the Renewable Energy Investment Fund (currently within Connecticut Innovations, Inc.) and be the aggressive, centralized effort to build a clean energy economy in the state. The Department would have \$2 billion in bonds to work with as an investment in the restructuring of the state's energy sources. Yes, \$2 billion is a major state investment,

but it should be a very high priority for state bonding because nothing else can be accomplished if the state is crippled by high energy prices.

The Department would serve many of the functions of the Energy Division of Office of Policy and Management (OPM), which in the last fuel crisis in the late 1970's had more than 80 staffers working on energy efficiency and energy independence. Only 10 staff at OPM work on energy issues today. The Department would plan ahead for fuel shortages and price increases; promote clean energy industries; promote renewable energy and conservation; and promote energy independence. The agency would take the lead in attracting energy firms; installing renewable energy systems in government buildings, residential homes and businesses; consolidating energy conservation programs; designing training programs for workers; and promoting local food production to conserve energy. All of this investment will have to meet Results Based Accountability principles to ensure wise use of the taxpayer's investment.

The era of cheap oil is over. The state is particularly vulnerable to liquid fuel prices increases. This topic has recently been the subject of Program Review and Investigation discussion, and may be again chosen for scrutiny in 2008. A coordinated effort on energy is the first step in leading our state into the new era of clean energy and energy efficiency, for the protection of our state's residents, businesses, and municipalities.