



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

MEMBER
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

Energy & Technology Committee
February 10, 2009 hearing
Re: **HB-6001**

To The Distinguished Co-Chairs and Members:

I submit this testimony in support of House Bill 6001, *An Act Prohibiting The Termination Of Nonregulated Utilities During The Winter Heating Season.*

Propane use has accounted for an increasing ratio of Connecticut's residential energy supply. Most of our present indicators suggest natural gas will continue gain traction as a growing component of Connecticut's residential energy portfolio. Many apartment complexes, including those of the low-income variety, use propane as the main heating source for their rental units.

Over the past few years I have heard from many constituents from the same low-income housing complex in my district. As citizens on the margins of poverty, they would all ask for help in modifying their payment plan and restoring their heat and hot water when their utility shut them off for non-payment. In some cases this was a terrible burden on my constituents, especially in winter.

Propane, as a non-regulated utility, has not been subject to the same kinds of industry protocols that other energy sources are. Recent reports suggest that this is proving to be problematic. I have appended my testimony with several columns by Hartford Courant watchdog George Gombossy, and with an investigative report on propane complaints by the Department of Consumer Protection.

I thank the committee for its consideration. I also encourage you to explore issues tangential to this that are covered in the appended material, such as the leasing of propane tanks, and the lack of consumer choice with suppliers.



Rep. Linda Orange