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Statement of Central Boiler, Inc.
before the General Law Committee
Senate Bill 779
February 13, 2009

Sen. Colapietro, Rep. Shapiro and members of the committee:

Central Boiler, Inc., is an industrywide leader in the manufacture of Outdoor Wood Furnaces. The company is located in Greenbrush, Minnesota, and maintains sales operations here in the state of Connecticut.

We would like to offer comments on **Senate Bill 779, *An Act Providing Consumer Protections to Purchasers of Outdoor Wood-Burning Furnaces***. This legislation will provide purchasers with a three-day right of rescission or cancellation on a purchase contract for an OWF. The bill also contains a provision granting authority to the Department of Environmental Protection to regulate OWF particulate emissions.

We provide an option to homeowners who want to heat their homes using a renewable natural resource, wood. Central Boiler is very confident that people who buy an OWF have done the necessary research as to the initial cost versus the longer payback on savings from avoiding oil, electric or natural gas heating costs.

Senate Bill 779 will provide consumers with a three-day right to cancel a purchase if they are having second thoughts. Central Boiler can accept this—although we really wonder if this bill is a “solution in search of a problem”. We have been told by the Department of Consumer Protection that there has not been a single complaint on this type of issue. Thus we really wonder if the legislation is needed.

Regardless, the bill contains two provisions that we believe are overkill. First, our dealers will have to include an “informational sheet” with the sales contract that is written by DEP. They will also have to get the purchaser to initial it and they will have to keep it on file for five years. Failure to do so could trigger a prosecution under the Connecticut Unfair Trade Practices Act.

The other statutes that relate to a three-day right of rescission (health clubs, dating services, buying clubs) do not contain a similar requirement for the inclusion of an informational sheet with the contract. We would therefore ask you to delete this provision (lines 45-55) as well as the violations language (lines 56-64).

Finally, Central Boiler does have a number of ideas as to DEP’s regulation of particulate matter and we will raise those issues with the Environment Committee once the bill is referred to them for consideration.

Thank you for considering our position on Senate Bill 779.