



March 12, 2010

Co-Chair Edward Meyer
Co-Chair Richard Roy
Senator John McKinney
Representative Clark Chapin

Members of Environment Committee:

My name is Peter Aziz, and I own Bantam Fuel, a small heating oil company serving 3,000 homes and businesses in Litchfield County. **I strongly support S.B. 382.**

At Bantam Fuel, we haven't delivered straight heating oil in 3½ years. Since October of 2006, every gallon we deliver has been a blend of heating oil and biodiesel. We made the switch because the blended product was readily available in New Haven Harbor, it didn't cost us any more than traditional heating oil, our customers' heating equipment required no modifications or adjustments, and it was the right thing to do.

We began cautiously, blending only 2% biodiesel with our heating oil to make a 2% "BioHeat." We wanted to see how it would perform in the below 0°F weather of the Litchfield Hills, and how it would perform in the wide variety of heating equipment we see in people's homes and businesses.

That first winter we had absolutely no problems. In fact, we found that the blend burned more cleanly than traditional heating oil, leaving cleaner fuel filters and less soot in furnaces. And since it burns with less smoke, we could tune our customers' equipment to slightly higher efficiencies. And at higher efficiencies, you burn less fuel, saving our customers money.

In three years we never lost a single customer because of our switch to BioHeat, and we never looked back. Today we're delivering a 5% BioHeat blend.

Our customers are happy because they have a fuel with cleaner combustion, higher efficiencies, less sediment, better lubricity, and cleaner emissions.

Our customers are happy with the fact that 5% of their heating fuel is a truly renewable resource, and much of that is grown right here in the USA. And they are happy that their heating fuel now has significantly less Greenhouse Gas emissions.

I support the part of the bill that reduces the sulfur content of heating oil, because that would mark another huge improvement in clean combustion, clean filters, reliable operation, and emissions that are better for the environment.

I stand here to tell you, from 3½ years' experience, that BioHeat works. It's available, it's affordable, it's delivered using the same ships and trucks, it's stored in the same tanks, and it's handled by the same local people our customers trust. From the standpoint of infrastructure, workability, and affordability, BioHeat works. It's a phenomenally clean fuel, and with your help it can be even cleaner.

As a society, we struggle with options for reducing pollution, reducing our carbon footprint, and reducing our dependence on foreign oil. Yet wind, solar, and hydroelectric power on a scale big enough to make any sort of difference is tremendously expensive, tremendously intrusive, and requires significant taxpayer dollars to subsidize projects that have a dubious future.

Shifting to any of these power sources, or even to Natural Gas, would require hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses in Connecticut to spend scarce dollars changing the heating systems they already have.

And here's where you can see the truly brilliant thing about this legislation, S.B. 382: With the stroke of a pen, mandating a biodiesel blend and a low sulfur formula for heating oil, Connecticut can immediately have the cleanest home heating fuel in the country.

No public spending is required. Not a penny. From the shipping into New Haven, Bridgeport, New London, and Hartford, to the hundreds of small heating oil companies across the state delivering personal service every day, the infrastructure is already here, already working.

And homeowners and businesses don't have to make a single change to the equipment in their basements.

With nothing more than the stroke of a pen, Connecticut can have the cleanest home heating fuel in the country. That's the brilliant thing about this legislation.

With S.B. 382 we're not giving the people of Connecticut an energy source they're not sure if they want, not sure if it will work, and not sure it's safe, at a price they can't afford. We're giving them a fuel they already choose, handled by the same industry, delivered by the same local professionals they already trust... only greener, cleaner, better.

When we announced the change from traditional heating oil to BioHeat, we were flooded with letters, emails, and phone calls from ordinary people saying "Good for you! Congratulations for doing the right thing!" When you pass this legislation, you too will be flooded with the congratulations of ordinary citizens.

Please support S.B. 382!

Respectfully,
Peter Aziz
Owner, Bantam Fuel