

March 10, 2010

Environment Committee
Connecticut General Assembly
Room 3200, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106



Re: Testimony in Opposition to SB-382

Dear Committee Members:

The American Highway Users Alliance is a 78-year old national federation of hundreds of non-profit associations, businesses, and motoring clubs. We represent the interests of millions of highway users nationwide, whether they travel by car, bus, truck, RV, or motorcycle.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to SB-382, an act to require a lowering of the sulfur content in heating oil sold in the state. While we applaud the desire of the committee to reduce pollution, we are concerned that the proposed standards could have some unintended negative consequences for highway diesel fuel users. We ask that you consider our views and make changes to the legislation.

As drafted, the new sulfur standard would create market competition between highway fuel and home heating oil that currently does not exist. A spike in demand for limited supplies of special fuel could have a sharp price impact on diesel prices, causing both seasonal spikes and year-round supply problems that would harm both residents of oil-heated homes and the operators of diesel vehicles.

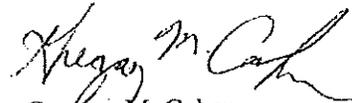
The national ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel standard is needed to enable the emissions control technology of the newest generation of diesel engines and prevent engine problems. This same reasoning does not apply to home heating equipment, which does not utilize the same type of emissions control technology as highway vehicles.

We recommend a more affordable standard, such as a 500-ppm standard by 2014, which would still dramatically decrease sulfur emissions from home heating oil. This standard could be reasonably expected to be adopted by other states throughout the Northeast region, which would prevent Connecticut from having higher-priced fuel than its neighbors.

Under a 500-ppm by 2014 plan, we believe major environmental benefits would be realized without the unintended consequences of price spikes in the highway fuel and home heating oil markets – spikes that hurt poor and middle-class people the most.

Thank you for your considering our views. We believe that the sulfur content in home heating oil could certainly be lowered in a thoughtful, flexible manner that helps improve the environment and limits economic impacts. We urge you to reconsider the current legislation and we would be pleased to work with you as you do so.

Sincerely,



Gregory M. Cohen
President and CEO