

Good Afternoon.

My name is Bob Reemsnyder, of Old Lyme, CT and I have been a Central Boiler Dealer since 2003.

I was very disappointed to hear about the proposed Bill 830 that would ban the use of outside wood furnaces. Every day, we see in the news that we should strive to reduce our dependency on foreign oil, that oil prices are going up and we should research alternative fuel sources. The bill passed in 2005 is restrictive enough to protect people, and rather than banning all use of this alternative heat source, why not take a reasonable approach and require that units meet EPA emission standards. Central Boiler has been selling a new, environmentally friendly unit for 3 years now, and has even offered very lucrative trade-ins for older units. This new design meets phase two EPA emission requirements, reduces the quantity of wood used for heat, and offers a safer alternative to fossil fuels. As dealers, we strive to educate our customers on good burning practices, and this new design minimizes the chances of burning inappropriate material by its very design.

This past year, we were reminded of the environmental damage that oil can cause as we watched huge black plumes of smoke over the Gulf, visible from outer space, pictures of oil soaked birds, currents of oil traveling closer and closer to land and people losing their lives work, due to one incident. In the 1970's, we did not ban cars because the emissions were causing damage to the environment, we required higher standards for the cars, so that they burned cleaner. We do not ban diesel buses and trucks because the emissions are unhealthy – we continue to work with manufacturers to find solutions to the problem.

Central boiler has been committed to building cleaner, more efficient units, that burn natural fuel sources such as wood, wood pellets and corn, and that meet or exceed the new EPA requirements, soon to be adopted.

Every year, for the past several years, this legislature has attempted to further regulate or ban the use of these units, creating uncertainty for buyers and owners. Sales tax revenues for the state have decreased dramatically, while my installers and plumbers sit idle. Our small family business, run by both my son and me, has suffered greatly. It seems to me state legislators should be concerned more about creating jobs, and decreasing the deficit, rather than harassing hard working families struggling to heat their homes. Central boiler and other manufacturers have taken on and met the challenge of designing clean burning units, the federal government has encouraged buying these efficient units with tax incentives, and the owners of these units have spent substantial hard earned money to install or modify older units to comply with the 2005 law.

Is the state prepared to reimburse furnace owners? They accepted the sales tax revenues, demanded that customers invest more in extending smoke stacks, acquire costly permits and the state has enjoyed the business and personal tax revenues from the dealers. Rather than considering a ban on these units, I urge you to vote down this ban, and rather encourage the eventual transition, over time, of all units to the cleaner, environmentally friendly units. Thank you for your time.