

**Testimony of Victory Energy Solutions
Before the Energy & Technology Committee**

S.B. No. 415 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE OPERATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY PROGRAM, WATER CONSERVATION AND THE OPERATIONS OF THE CLEAN ENERGY FINANCE AND INVESTMENT AUTHORITY

Submitted by
Raquel Kennedy, Principal
March 13, 2012

Dear Senator Fonfara, Representative Nardello, and members of the Committee,

S.B. No. 415 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE OPERATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY PROGRAM, WATER CONSERVATION AND THE OPERATIONS OF THE CLEAN ENERGY FINANCE AND INVESTMENT AUTHORITY has significant merits including Section 11 of SB 415 deals with all Energy Savings by capturing the program benefits for any energy savings and compare it to program costs and we enthusiastically support it.

Dear Senator Fonfara, Representative Nardello, and members of the Committee,

S.B. No. 415 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE OPERATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY PROGRAM, WATER CONSERVATION AND THE OPERATIONS OF THE CLEAN ENERGY FINANCE AND INVESTMENT AUTHORITY has significant merits including Section 11 of SB 415 deals with all Energy Savings by capturing the program benefits for any energy savings and compare it to program costs and we enthusiastically support it.

The Energy and Technology Committee has a tremendous opportunity to demonstrate leadership and advance a vision of a brighter energy future for our State. We are encouraged that your leadership will provide the needed catalyst to move forward, to build a stronger energy efficiency infrastructure and to help facilitate our ability to create new jobs and contribute to a growing Connecticut economy.

Victory Energy Solutions is a three year old Energy Management and Home Performance Company and an approved vendor for the Home Energy Solutions Program under the CT Energy Efficiency Fund. We began our company with 3 employees and now have 24 individuals under our employ in the City of New Britain. Most of the people we hired were either unemployed or underemployed and come from the major urban centers. In conjunction with state and federal workforce development programs, there has been an investment of over \$100,000 in training our people. Our work force has expanded and contracted over the past year due to uncertainty in the CEEF funding scenario, as well as limited funding for oil heated homes under the HES program and we laid off 40% of our workforce last spring.....many of whom we have since rehired. As a small business owner, it is difficult to plan ahead when policies are not in place. Running a home performance business involves specially trained manpower in the field, support staff in the office as well as very specialized equipment and infrastructure. These positions require a stable environment so that we can better our skills, which drive us towards our mutual goal of increased overall energy savings in a home.

Section 51 of S.B. No. 415 however, contains language that continues to impose a CAP on oil heated homes, which make up almost half of all homes in Connecticut. It is widely known that various interests are fervently looking at opportunities for oil heated homes to participate in contributing to the fund or to identify a formula that truly works so it's difficult to understand the reason to include this caveat in this Bill. The cap will have a very negative impact on heating oil customers, HES vendors, HVAC, and home performance contractors. It undermines our ability to move forward and grow with this industry. Right now funding for oil heated homes in the NU service area is slated to run out in about 8 weeks and UI service area much sooner. The Cap needs to be removed now and for 2013.

I can tell you with certainty that if the \$500,000 limit on funding of CEEF funds for oil and propane homes is not removed or suspended

- There will be layoffs from companies that provide services that reduce energy consumption, the need to produce more energy, reduces the strain on our environment and increases the comfort, health and safety of CT homes.
- The Green Jobs infrastructure that is growing will be in danger of being dismantled.
- The millions that have been expended for training will be wasted
- The cap will result in the lack of participation of a very crucial and large portion of our homes
- CEEF spending and savings goals would be rendered unattainable

If Connecticut wants to be a national leader in energy efficiency, continuing this CAP is a very big step in the wrong direction. In 2012 and beyond companies like ours will either consider expanding our capacity or reducing the size of our workforce partially as result of decisions you make. By working together as partners and through communication, we can build a successful program which will benefit all us through job stabilization and growth; and energy efficiencies. Your decisions now will either help oil heated homes become more energy efficient or leave them out in the cold. Your decisions will either be seen as the cornerstone new and progressive energy policy or one of the reasons many jobs will be lost while perpetuating an economy that continues to struggle.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Raquel Kennedy
Victory Energy Solutions
One Hartford Square
New Britain, CT 06052
RaquelK@victoryenergysolutions.com

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Raquel Kennedy
Principal
Office: (877) 306-4483
Cell: (860) 402-7179

victoryenergysolutions.com

Victory Energy Solutions

Gateway Crossing

One Hartford Square Unit 16-206

New Britain, CT 06052

