

Written Testimony of Judith Allen  
Before the Energy and Technology Committee

In support of  
Senate Bill 450, An Act Concerning Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy

Submitted by  
Judith Allen, West Hartford Home Owner  
March 20, 2012

I would like to thank the members of the Energy and Technology Committee for giving me this opportunity to provide written testimony in support of Senate Bill 450, AAC Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy.

In particular, I urged your support of the sections of this bill that establish full access to the state's energy efficiency programs for heating oil customers. I also urge you to take action this session to establish a new and steady funding stream. The 48% of Connecticut homes now heating with fuel oil, will lose most of their access to cost-saving, pollution-cutting programs like Home Energy Solutions. This bill corrects that inequity by setting up a Fuel Oil Conservation Account to help pay for efficiency improvements to buildings and to replace inefficient oil heating equipment, and ensures that all Connecticut residents have equal access to Home Energy Solutions at the same cost regardless of the fuel they use. These measures will let oil customers take advantage of programs that can save them hundreds of dollars a year and at the same time generate jobs in the energy efficiency industry and the booming industries addressing reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Last summer I had an energy audit done on my home. My home is over 50 years and has been in my family since it was built. My father was an HVAC engineer. He prided himself on his knowledge of heating and cooling systems, and made use of the technology available at the time to make our home energy efficient. So when I set up my audit I was somewhat confident my home would do well in the audit. The audit revealed that I was far from energy efficient, and the improvements provided made a huge difference. My home heating system was no longer safe to run and I had to replace it. I was not able to get a replacement until November. The energy saving improvements helped keep me warm with very little need for space heaters. I was surprised at how much difference there was. And I was pleased to make one more step toward the solution of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Senate Bill 450 is especially important to me because of its potential to further reduce Connecticut's greenhouse gas emissions, and helping us meet our obligations under the Global Warming Solutions Act (P.A. 08-98). We need to address that almost half of individuals and families heat with oil, the most polluting of all the heating fuels. We need to especially provide households heating with oil ways to cut their oil consumption and thereby reduce their carbon dioxide emissions.

Senate Bill 450 is needed because it also ensures fairness. Right now fuel oil customers contribute to funds providing audits and upgrades through their electric bills. Yet they do not have equal access to those funds. Heating with oil is the most expensive way to heat, and prices are rising. It is not fair that residents who pay the most for heat have the least access to programs that can bring those costs down.

I couldn't be here today because I am meeting with some of Connecticut's labor unions. This bill would create new jobs. There would be additional need for workers who are trained to conduct audits, and it will create new demands for industries to provide cost effective, low energy, safe, and environmentally sustaining, solutions.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony. Please support Senate Bill 450 for the potential cost savings it offers to the half of Connecticut ratepayers who heat with oil, for equal access to energy efficiency programs regardless of heating fuel, for its job creation potential, and for the need to address the reduction of greenhouse gasses here in Connecticut.

Sincerely,  
Judith Allen  
25 Fowler Dr.  
West Hartford, CT 06110  
jdyallen@aol.com