

**Testimony of TriState Solar Alliance / Don van Rhyn
Before the Energy & Technology Committee**

In Support of
SENATE BILL 450,
AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY CONSERVATION AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

Submitted by
Don van Rhyn

March 20, 2012

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

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 450, AAC Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy. I am pleased to support this bill.

In particular, I urge your support of the sections of this bill that establish full access to the state's energy efficiency programs for heating oil customers. Without action this session to establish a new and steady funding stream, the 48% of Connecticut homes that use fuel oil will lose most of their access to cost-saving, pollution-cutting programs like Home Energy Solutions. This bill corrects that situation by setting up a Fuel Oil Conservation Account to help pay for efficiency improvements to buildings and to replace inefficient oil heating equipment (Section 1), and by requiring that

Connecticut residents have access to Home Energy Solutions at the same cost regardless of the kind of fuel they use (Section 21). **These measures will let oil customers take advantage of programs that can save them hundreds of dollars a year while generating jobs at efficiency businesses and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.**

This is important because as a state and as a country we import far too much oil (USA = \$450 Billion in 2011).

For the sake of the health of our economy we need to use that money to employ Americans, not send it abroad and make America poorer.

Our purchases of international oil represent the largest ever, voluntary transfer of wealth in the last 300 years, if not ever!

Reducing oil consumption at home, results in reducing our dependence on foreign oil, which makes America more successful – This should be the goal of everyone in America (Republicans and Democrats alike).

equipment. The bill removes the cap on energy program assistance for oil customers. It specifies that all oil, gas, and electric heat customers will be able to access the services of the Home Energy Solutions program at the same costs regardless of heating source, for as long as that program is supported by a surcharge on utility bills.

The bill also requires DEEP and the Department of Consumer Protection to conduct studies about what barriers might prevent oil dealers from promoting energy efficiency, and about the costs and benefits of state incentives to encourage conversion from heating oil to cleaner, cheaper natural gas.

Please support SB 450 for the cost savings it offers to half of Connecticut ratepayers, its air quality and GHG reduction benefits, and the jobs it will protect and create at our local efficiency businesses.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Don van Rhyn
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