Testimony of William B. Upholt, Board Member of the Interreligious Eco-Justice Network and Commissioner of the Hartford Advisory Commission on the Environment (affiliations for information only)

Before the Energy & Technology Committee

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

Submitted by
William B. Upholt
March 20, 2012

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

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 450, An Act Concerning Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy. **I strongly** support this bill.

I particularly support **the sections of this bill that establish full access to the state's energy efficiency programs for heating oil customers.** If this bill is not enacted 48% of Connecticut homes (those that use fuel oil for heating) will lose most of their access to cost-saving, pollution-cutting programs, particularly the subsidized Home Energy Solutions program. 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.**

My wife and I have used Home Energy Solutions (or its predecessor) to evaluate the energy efficiency of present and past homes. We found this program to be very valuable as it both increased the efficiency of heating of our house and decreased our gas, electricity and water bills by simple upgrades such as compact fluorescent light bulbs, low flow shower heads, insulation of hot water pipes, etc. as well as encouraged and stimulated us through various rebate plans to add insulation to our attic and basement, replace our furnace and hot water heater and to purchase Energy Star appliances including a dishwasher, washing machine and dryer.

I am very concerned about the impact of our energy usage on carbon in the atmosphere, both in terms of its contribution to global climate change as well as to air quality. We are also concerned that a lapse in funding might well mean that businesses will

have to lay off workers and have an adverse impact on Connecticut's home performance and energy efficiency sector, an area which has significant growth potential and is a business sector which contributes significantly to our future well being.

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,

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