



Written testimony of
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Commerce Committee

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Good morning Senator LeBeau and Representative Perone and other distinguished members of your committee. I am David Gable, President of Hocon Gas of Shelton, CT. I have been in business in CT since 1952, employ 120 people and serve 35,000 customers in Connecticut who purchase propane, *Americas other natural gas*, from my company. I am here to comment on **H.B. No. 6650: AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS**.

Although the propane industry lacked recognition in DEEP's Draft Energy Plan, we appreciate the greater recognition we have now received in the final plan (CES). Historically propane has always been a forerunner fuel when natural gas was unavailable. In fact, many of Connecticut's natural gas utilities owned or partnered with the propane gas industry in order to service new developments or convert customers to gas service with propane before natural gas mains arrived.

When an existing oil consumer's heating system fails and natural gas is not available, many of these consumers still do not know they could easily convert to propane gas fired heating system in anticipation of the future arrival of natural gas. Should natural gas become available, they can inexpensively convert their heating system and avoid the high capital cost of replacing a fairly new oil fired heating system.

The goal of H.B. 6650 is good but the implementation is seriously flawed. Rather than help support the conversion process, it penalizes the propane and oil consumer with yet another new energy tax and an additional layer of costly oversight. We have an existing energy efficiency program already in place with its many layers of administration. Since everyone uses electricity, wouldn't the State of Connecticut be better served by slightly expanding the Combined Benefit Charge on each consumer's electricity bill? One dollar per month per consumer would generate roughly \$19 million dollars to be spent on improved energy efficiency with no additional overhead expense.

Historically, our state has been known to raid funds. The Gross Receipts Tax is a good example of this and the fund that I am testifying today is another example as well. Creating two more pots to raid compliments of propane and oil consumers certainly is not the way to go here.

I thank you for your time and would be happy to answer any questions.