



COMPETITIVE
RESOURCES



Testimony of Douglas Cahill Regarding HB 6650 An Act Concerning Energy Efficiency Programs

Good Morning Senator LeBeau, Representative Perone, and members of the Commerce Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to allow me to speak in support of HB 6650. My name is Doug Cahill. I'm a partner in Competitive Resources, Incorporated (CRI), a residential energy services company in Yalesville. Our business, which was founded in 1997, specializes in providing weatherization services to local homeowners and tenants under the Home Energy Solutions Program (HES) sponsored by Energize CT and administered by Connecticut Light & Power (CL&P) and United Illuminating Company (UI). In addition, our Connecticut staff (now approaching 50 employees), provides similar services to income eligible residential consumers throughout the state and also serves customers of the Connecticut Municipal Electric Energy Cooperative (CMEEC).

In past years, the uncertainty surrounding efficiency funding for oil heated homes through HES, has impacted the ability of companies like mine to create and sustain 'green jobs'. There have been times when programs like HES weren't even available to those who use fossil fuels. Over the past couple of years, thanks to ARRA funding and some temporary legislative measures put in place late last year, contractors like us have at least been able to provide many of the services to these customers. Since a very high percentage of homes in Connecticut use oil and propane as their primary heat source, without a stable source of oil efficiency funding, homeowners could be asked to pay \$300-\$400.00 for the same service for which others currently pay only \$75.00. Under current circumstances, these homes may be unable to access the same rebates and incentives for insulation, windows, and HVAC equipment replacement very soon.

As the existing stop gap measure for funding expires, asking consumers using oil or propane to pay significantly higher co-payments for HES services will be the only alternative to providing efficiency service to them going forward. From experience, I can assure you that this will be a major disincentive to participation. By enacting the funding mechanism proposed in HB 6650, I contend that the nearly 50% of the state's residents with more reasonably priced access to efficiency services will actually enhance the current societal benefits of HES by leveraging the modest fuel oil and propane funding with the current charges on their electric bills.

It's a given that every customer of CL&P and UI, pay into the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund on a monthly basis. The customers served by the municipal utilities in the state also contribute to their own efficiency fund. Here are some points for consideration as to why all customers should be allowed to participate on an equal basis (which the bill under consideration could provide):

Direct Electric Savings Considerations

- Many residents, including myself, heat with oil but have central air conditioning. Many also have electric water heaters.
- The vast majority of fossil boilers and furnaces utilize electric fans, circulating pumps, and blower motors to operate.

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- Approximately 27% of the dwelling units in Connecticut utilize well water. My guess would be that the percentage of these residents with oil or propane heat is higher than 48%. Since the HES program provides water saving devices, the wells run less often.

Societal Benefits Resulting from Serving Fossil Fuel Customers with HES

- Cleaner Air – Connecticut childhood asthma rates are between 2 and 3 percent higher than the national average according to the Center for Disease Control. By providing air and duct sealing in these homes, we not only save energy but we reduce air pollution significantly.
- Cleaner Air- The less fuel consumed correlates to fewer road trips for the delivery trucks.
- Cleaner Air – Since HES services include recommendations for system upgrades, we've seen a lot of older inefficient equipment replaced with modern clean burning units.
- Health and Safety – The HES visit includes inspection for combustion issues, possible asbestos risks, in some cases, electrical concerns such as knob and tube wiring. In 2011 our company was unable to serve nearly 350 customers because of health concerns identified at the time of the visit.
- Health and Safety – HES services can eliminate the need to make the choice between comfort and saving money.
- Health and Safety – In extreme cases, given the high price of fuel, HES can mean the difference between eating properly and staying warm.
- Quality of Life – Could the savings in heating, hot water, and electricity costs mean the difference between a Mom or Dad having to get a part time job to supplement the family's income? Can a value be placed on that?

In closing, I encourage you to do your part to ensure that the Efficiency industry continues to flourish in Connecticut by supporting HB 6650. I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.