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Written Testimony of Peter Ellner,  
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Commerce Committee  
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House Bill No. 6650  
AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS

Peter Ellner  
91 Punkup Road  
Oxford, CT 06478

My name is Peter Ellner and I'm speaking on House Bill 6650 An Act Concerning Energy Efficiency Programs. I live in a semi-rural area that normally would have fairly clean air. However, in recent years, during cold months the air is filled with an odor from people burning wood, garbage and other low-grade fuels to heat their homes. When I've talked to my neighbors I've learned that they are caught in a bind of not being able to afford to replace their inefficient oil furnaces or even to pay for common sense home improvements like insulation.

I would like to call for the legislature to provide a mechanism to allow home heating oil users in Connecticut to access the same energy efficiency benefits that are currently provided to electric and gas customers under the Home Energy Solutions program. This would include assistance for home energy audits, insulation, and replacements to furnaces and boilers. It would be financed by a small surcharge on heating oil.

By nearly every analysis, efficiency programs like this yield the biggest bang for the buck in saving consumers money on their energy costs. This program would provide an opportunity for oil dealers to obtain increased profits by offering repairs, retrofits and new equipment to their customers at mark-ups that in many cases would be far higher than the oil they deliver.

The governor has stated that his goal is to return Connecticut to the top of the annual energy efficiency rankings by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy. I strongly support this effort and I believe that permanently expanding the Home Energy Solutions program to consumers of heating oil would be a constructive step in this direction.

Thank you