



## Testimony Regarding HB.6360 - An Act Concerning Implementation of Connecticut's Comprehensive Energy Strategy

Good Morning Senator Duff, Representative Reed, and Members of the Energy and Technology Committee.

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, we provide similar services to income eligible residential consumers throughout the state and also serve customers of the Connecticut Municipal Electric Energy Cooperative (CMEEC).

Having had the opportunity to meet with many of you over the last few weeks, I'd like to start by thanking you for demonstrating your understanding of the energy and financial challenges that our State currently faces and your willingness to address them in a balanced and logical manner. With nearly 40 Connecticut employees and quite a few suppliers and subcontractors working with us, CRI is a great example of what "green jobs" are all about. As members of the Northeast Energy Efficiency Council (NEEC) and the Home Performance Alliance of Connecticut (HPACT), we feel we have the experience and industry knowledge to provide input as you weigh the proposed terms of Connecticut's Comprehensive Energy Strategy. Just for the record, the following comments relate to the residential provisions of the bill and may not necessarily be the official positions of either of the trade organizations mentioned.

From the vendor's perspective, it is great to see that the Energy Efficiency Board (referred to as the Energy Conservation Management Board in the bill) is looking at a three year window for the State's efficiency plans rather than on a year by year basis. This makes planning for everyone involved much better and provides a degree of stability which allows participants to make longer term decisions and financial commitments.

I am also pleased to see that the bill retains the Governors previously stated goal of weatherizing 80% of Connecticut's homes by the year 2030. The infrastructure to accomplish this task has been steadily developing over the past few years. However, meeting this ambitious challenge will require funding substantially greater than is currently being offered through the systems benefit charges on electric and natural gas bills. In addition, since half of Connecticut households currently use fuel oil or propane to heat the dwelling, there is no permanently defined method of providing funding to encourage energy efficiency. In fact, the legislature will need to address the fossil fuel issue in the next few months as the stopgap measure that was put in place last year will expire later on this summer. I strongly urge you to consider some mechanism for funding fossil fuel efficiency as part of the Energy Strategy.



## Testimony Regarding HB.6360 - An Act Concerning Implementation of Connecticut's Comprehensive Energy Strategy

The provision of the bill that calls for the establishment of a pilot for home energy ratings is another positive step in the direction of achieving more participation in residential efficiency programs. The current HES program can fairly easily be employed to determine a home's level of efficiency provided a general scale is established. Homeowners (and potential buyers) would have a benchmark by which to compare their house with others of a similar size as long as certain lifestyle issues are also taken into consideration.

A lot of talk has been generated by the provision that fuel switching be encouraged as part of an overall energy strategy. Up until this point in time, efficiency services have been delivered with no consideration given to fuel switching. Technically, a BTU is a BTU regardless of the fuel source. Cost of the available alternate fuel sources were not considered as part of an efficiency presentation in utility administered programs. The potential savings for the existing fuel source has been presented along with the estimated cost of making efficiency improvements. My recommendation would be that if fuel switching is presented as an option, the customer must employee efficiency measures as part of the deal. In other words, they would be required to weatherize their home and install the most efficient equipment for the new fuel if incentives are to be offered.

Last, but not least, over the past few years, the members of HPACT have discovered many health and safety issues in homes we have visited. These include: natural gas or other fuel leaks and/or the presence of mold, mildew, and asbestos. Obviously, these concerns must be addressed before the Technicians proceed with any weatherization work. The costs associated with rectifying these issues have never been addressed. In fact, they often result in making the programs appear slightly less cost effective because of the initial expense in dispatching a crew who ultimately can offer only "courtesy measures" like light bulbs or water reduction measures. I suggest that some sort of consideration or credit be given to ensure that these, in some instances, life saving efforts be factored in to program cost effectiveness calculations. I also believe that the societal benefits of reduced air pollution resulting from program efficiency efforts should be translated into dollars and cents when it comes to cost effectiveness calculations.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my suggestions and please feel free to contact me at 860-633-2936 with questions at any time.

Sincerely,

*Doug Cahill*

Douglas Cahill  
Vice President