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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you today in opposition of SB 299 an act establishing a prepaid consumer heating fuel contract guaranty fund. A guaranty fund harms both the consumer and businesses alike. Whether a consumer takes part in a prepaid program or not, the costs will be passed on to all heating customers. The costs may appear manageable now, but the tax that started the underground storage tank fund began at 3% and is now 8.81%. The costs for that fund are out of control and the tax collected, 26 cents per gallon of gasoline, does not even go to the Tank Fund anymore.

As we all know, Connecticut is already one of the most expensive states in which to conduct business. My parents started our family business in 1939. We are celebrating our 75<sup>th</sup> year, but I keep wondering just how much longer the company can survive in a state where we continually have to comply with burdensome regulations and programs - especially ones that do not solve the problem at hand and just add to the cost of doing business.

A Guaranty Fund will incentivize consumers to shop for unrealistic low prices instead of good value and security - leading too risky purchases of "to good to be true" offers.

The bill starts with a \$3,900 tax and then assesses a \$500 annual fee - how much will that fee be 10 years from now??? Are we looking at yet another Tank Fund!

As a law abiding business owner and tax payer I should not be penalized financially because of a competitor who did not follow the law. So now we are penalized even further for conducting business properly and abiding by the laws established in the State of CT.

We oppose SB 299!

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Gada Jr.