



December 29, 2011

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
United States Senate
702 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RELIEF FOR AMERICANS THIS WINTER

Dear Senator Blumenthal:

Winter is upon us. Across the country, millions of Americans are turning up their thermostats to keep their families safe and warm. But at the same time they are experiencing unprecedented hardships including a depressed economy, high unemployment and volatile energy prices. As a member of Congress, there are several ways in which you can bring these consumers some much-needed relief.

The New England Fuel Institute (NEFI), established in 1942, represents some 1,200 home heating fuel retailers or “dealers” and related services companies in the six New England states. These companies are small, multi-generation family owned- and operated-businesses that care deeply for their communities and customers. They are helping to meet consumers’ needs through customized delivery, payment and budget programs and many sell discounted fuel to low-income families enrolled in fuel assistance programs. When there is real need, our members will often deliver fuel without regard for a customer’s ability to pay. Heating oil providers will not leave Americans out in the cold this winter.

We invite the Congress to join us by considering the following policy initiatives:

Home Energy Efficiency & Conservation

The most immediate way to lower home heating costs is through efficiency, conservation and consumer education. For ten years, the National Oilheat Research Alliance (NORA) was instrumental in transitioning the industry to a cleaner, low-sulfur fuel that will utilize cutting-edge efficiency technologies and renewable energy such as sustainable biofuels. These efforts have already dramatically reduced fossil fuel use. NORA also offers conservation and safety programs and proper training for industry professionals, including service managers and technicians. You can find more on the benefits to your constituents at www.supportnora.org.

Unfortunately, the federal statute authorizing NORA expired on February 6, 2010 and Congress has yet to renew it. Now more than ever, oilheat states, businesses and consumers need this valuable program to help reduce consumption and bring to market a new generation of efficient and renewable home heating technologies. Thank you for cosponsoring the pending NORA Reauthorization Act (S.949). We hope you will urge passage of a temporary extension of the program until Congress can act on a long-term measure.

Congress must also address inadequacies in the federal home efficiency (Section 25C) tax credit program. For years, oilheat consumers have been left out of the credit because of deficient eligibility language for oilheat furnaces and boilers. The current program is also insufficient in that it places a \$150 cap on the installation of appliances, limits the overall credit to \$500 and does not include labor costs. Congress should renew the Section 25C tax credits, but must also eliminate the appliance caps, increase the credit to at least \$1,000, include labor costs and revise the eligibility language for oil-fired appliances.

Support for Energy Assistance Programs

For many low income families and elderly and disabled Americans, the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) offers some relief in these troubled times. Further, an increasing number of

veterans also rely on the program. According to the National Energy Assistance Directors Association, the number of veterans being served has increased to 20%. At least 12% of the 1.8 million veterans receiving the benefit have served in Iraq or Afghanistan. Another 7% is serving active-duty personnel and their families.

While our nation faces major fiscal challenges, LIHEAP cuts affect millions of households and thousands of veterans, active-duty military and their families. We applaud you and the entire Congress for rejecting the President's proposed 50% cut to LIHEAP for fiscal year 2012. However, the current funding level of \$3.5 billion is \$1.6 billion below the amount authorized and will fail to meet the public need, especially if the economic and unemployment crises persist. Congress must fully fund the LIHEAP program for FY13.

American Energy Independence

Alternative energy sources such as biofuels grow increasingly popular and have been embraced by our industry. Yet we must also acknowledge the immediate needs of American consumers who will continue to be dependent on fossil fuels for the foreseeable future. Recent crude oil discoveries within the contiguous United States, especially in North Dakota and Ohio, can put us on the path to energy independence. More than 2 million bpd of oil is immediately recoverable in proven reserves and millions more could be recovered elsewhere if prohibitions on exploration were lifted and infrastructure improved. We ask your support for a comprehensive energy policy that includes all American-made energy, including conventional fossil fuels.

We are disappointed with the President's recent decision to delay the Keystone XL oil pipeline until after the 2012 election. The pipeline would transport an additional 700,000 barrels per day of North American oil from the Dakotas, Montana, Oklahoma and Canada to refineries in the Gulf Coast and then on to consumers. It would create up to 20,000 construction and manufacturing jobs and thousands more in the broader energy industry. We applaud the passage of legislation to expedite the Keystone XL pipeline. We urge continued pressure on the Obama administration to make a decision in the best interest of American energy consumers.

Energy Market Stability & Transparency

We also believe in the importance of stable, transparent and responsive energy derivative markets and insist that the prices they set be reflective of real-world supply and demand fundamentals. For this reason, NEFI was a vocal supporter of derivatives market reforms included in Title VII of last year's Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Act. Recent developments such as the collapse of MF Global highlight the need for these vital reforms. However, these market reforms are in real danger of being weakened, repealed or delayed. Congress must not allow this to happen. We commend you for cosponsoring legislation (S.1200 and S.1598) to protect and strengthen commodity trading rules, including vital new limits on excessive speculation.

We are pleased Congress rejected the 15% cut to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) approved by the House last summer and applaud the \$3 billion funding increase. We urge your support for additional funding as necessary in the coming years to ensure vigorous implementation and enforcement of new trading rules. We also hope for a Senate companion to H.R.3665, which would offset CFTC funding through a fee structure identical to the one that is used to fund the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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Michael C. Trunzo
President & CEO

cc: Chairman of the Board Howard Peterson of Peterson Oil Service, Worcester, MA
Government Affairs Committee Chairman Thomas Devine of Devine Bioheat, Norwalk, CT
Connecticut Vice President Rick Bologna of Westmore Fuel Co., Inc., Greenwich, CT
Independent Connecticut Petroleum Association President & CEO Gene Guilford



December 29, 2011

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
United States Senate
706 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RELIEF FOR AMERICANS THIS WINTER

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December 29, 2011

The Honorable John F. Kerry
United States Senate
218 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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Massachusetts Vice President Scott MacFarlane of MacFarlane Energy, Dedham, MA
Massachusetts Oilheat Council President Michael Ferrante



December 29, 2011

The Honorable Scott Brown
United States Senate
359 Dirsek Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RELIEF FOR AMERICANS THIS WINTER

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number of veterans being served has increased to 20%. At least 12% of the 1.8 million veterans receiving the benefit have served in Iraq or Afghanistan. Another 7% is serving active-duty personnel and their families.

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Like you, we are disappointed with the President's decision to delay the Keystone XL oil pipeline until after the 2012 election. The pipeline would transport an additional 700,000 barrels per day of North American oil from the Dakotas, Montana, Oklahoma and Canada to refineries in the Gulf Coast and then on to consumers. It would create up to 20,000 construction and manufacturing jobs and thousands more in the broader energy industry. We applaud the passage of legislation to expedite the Keystone XL pipeline. We urge continued pressure on the Obama administration to make a decision in the best interest of American energy consumers.

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December 29, 2011

The Honorable Susan M. Collins
United States Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RELIEF FOR AMERICANS THIS WINTER

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Maine Vice President Michael Estes of Estes Oil Burner Service, York, ME
Maine Energy Marketers Association President Jamie Py



December 29, 2011

The Honorable Olympia J. Snowe
United States Senate
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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veterans also rely on the program. According to the National Energy Assistance Directors Association, the number of veterans being served has increased to 20%. At least 12% of the 1.8 million veterans receiving the benefit have served in Iraq or Afghanistan. Another 7% is serving active-duty personnel and their families.

While our nation faces major fiscal challenges, LIHEAP cuts affect millions of households and thousands of veterans, active-duty military and their families. We applaud you and the entire Congress for rejecting the President's proposed 50% cut to LIHEAP for fiscal year 2012. However, the current funding level of \$3.5 billion is \$1.6 billion below the amount authorized and will fail to meet the public need, especially if the economic and unemployment crises persist. Congress must fully fund the LIHEAP program for FY13.

American Energy Independence

Alternative energy sources such as biofuels grow increasingly popular and have been embraced by our industry. Yet we must also acknowledge the immediate needs of American consumers who will continue to be dependent on fossil fuels for the foreseeable future. Recent crude oil discoveries within the contiguous United States, especially in North Dakota and Ohio, can put us on the path to energy independence. More than 2 million bpd of oil is immediately recoverable in proven reserves and millions more could be recovered elsewhere if prohibitions on exploration were lifted and infrastructure improved. Congress must enact a comprehensive energy policy that includes all American-made energy, including conventional fossil fuels.

We are disappointed with the President's recent decision to delay the Keystone XL oil pipeline until after the 2012 election. The pipeline would transport an additional 700,000 barrels per day of North American oil from the Dakotas, Montana, Oklahoma and Canada to refineries in the Gulf Coast and then on to consumers. It would create up to 20,000 construction and manufacturing jobs and thousands more in the broader energy industry. We applaud the passage of legislation to expedite the Keystone XL pipeline. We urge continued pressure on the Obama administration to make a decision in the best interest of American energy consumers.

Energy Market Stability & Transparency

We also believe in the importance of stable, transparent and responsive energy derivative markets and insist that the prices they set be reflective of real-world supply and demand fundamentals. For this reason, NEFI was a vocal supporter of derivatives market reforms included in Title VII of last year's Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Act. Recent developments such as the collapse of MF Global highlight the need for these vital reforms. However, these market reforms are in real danger of being weakened, repealed or delayed. Congress must not allow this to happen. We ask your support for new legislation (such as S.1598) designed to protect and strengthen commodity trading rules, including vital new limits on excessive speculation.

We are pleased Congress rejected the 15% cut to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) approved by the House last summer and applaud the \$3 billion funding increase. We urge your support for additional funding as necessary in the coming years to ensure vigorous implementation and enforcement of new trading rules. We also hope for a Senate companion to H.R.3665, which would offset CFTC funding through a fee structure identical to the one that is used to fund the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support for the above policy initiatives. Together, we can bring real relief to American consumers this winter and in the years to come.

Sincerely,



Michael C. Trunzo
President & CEO

cc: Chairman of the Board Howard Peterson of Peterson Oil Service, Worcester, MA
Government Affairs Committee Chairman Thomas Devine of Devine Bioheat, Norwalk, CT
Maine Vice President Michael Estes of Estes Oil Burner Service, York, ME
Maine Energy Marketers Association President Jamie Py



December 29, 2011

The Honorable Kelly Ayotte
United States Senate
144 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RELIEF FOR AMERICANS THIS WINTER

Dear Senator Ayotte:

Winter is upon us. Across the country, millions of Americans are turning up their thermostats to keep their families safe and warm. But at the same time they are experiencing unprecedented hardships including a depressed economy, high unemployment and volatile energy prices. As a member of Congress, there are several ways in which you can bring these consumers some much-needed relief.

The New England Fuel Institute (NEFI), established in 1942, represents some 1,200 home heating fuel retailers or “dealers” and related services companies in the six New England states. These companies are small, multi-generation family owned- and operated-businesses that care deeply for their communities and customers. They are helping to meet consumers’ needs through customized delivery, payment and budget programs and many sell discounted fuel to low-income families enrolled in fuel assistance programs. When there is real need, our members will often deliver fuel without regard for a customer’s ability to pay. Heating oil providers will not leave Americans out in the cold this winter.

We invite the Congress to join us by considering the following policy initiatives:

Home Energy Efficiency & Conservation

The most immediate way to lower home heating costs is through efficiency, conservation and consumer education. For ten years, the National Oilheat Research Alliance (NORA) was instrumental in transitioning the industry to a cleaner, low-sulfur fuel that will utilize cutting-edge efficiency technologies and renewable energy such as sustainable biofuels. These efforts have already dramatically reduced fossil fuel use. NORA also offers conservation and safety programs and proper training for industry professionals, including service managers and technicians. You can find more on the benefits to your constituents at www.supportnora.org.

Unfortunately, the federal statute authorizing NORA expired on February 6, 2010 and Congress has yet to renew it. Now more than ever, oilheat states, businesses and consumers need this valuable program to help reduce consumption and bring to market a new generation of efficient and renewable home heating technologies. We hope you will cosponsor the pending NORA Reauthorization Act (S.949) and support at least a temporary extension of the program until Congress can act on the longer-term measure.

Congress must also address inadequacies in the federal home efficiency (Section 25C) tax credit program. For years, oilheat consumers have been left out of the credit because of deficient eligibility language for oilheat furnaces and boilers. The current program is also insufficient in that it places a \$150 cap on the installation of appliances, limits the overall credit to \$500 and does not include labor costs. Congress should renew the Section 25C tax credits, but must also eliminate the appliance caps, increase the credit to at least \$1,000, include labor costs and revise the eligibility language for oil-fired appliances.

Support for Energy Assistance Programs

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Like you, we are disappointed with the President's decision to delay the Keystone XL oil pipeline until after the 2012 election. The pipeline would transport an additional 700,000 barrels per day of North American oil from the Dakotas, Montana, Oklahoma and Canada to refineries in the Gulf Coast and then on to consumers. It would create up to 20,000 construction and manufacturing jobs and thousands more in the broader energy industry. We applaud the passage of legislation to expedite the Keystone XL pipeline. We urge continued pressure on the Obama administration to make a decision in the best interest of American energy consumers.

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Thank you in advance for your consideration and support for the above policy initiatives. Together, we can bring real relief to American consumers this winter and in the years to come.

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Michael C. Trunzo
President & CEO

cc: Chairman of the Board Howard Peterson of Peterson Oil Service, Worcester, MA
Government Affairs Committee Chairman Thomas Devine of Devine Bioheat, Norwalk, CT
New Hampshire Vice President Dana Jones of White Mountain Oil & Propane, North Conway, NH
Oilheat Council of New Hampshire Executive Director Robert Scully



December 29, 2011

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senate
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RELIEF FOR AMERICANS THIS WINTER

Dear Senator Shaheen:

Winter is upon us. Across the country, millions of Americans are turning up their thermostats to keep their families safe and warm. But at the same time they are experiencing unprecedented hardships including a depressed economy, high unemployment and volatile energy prices. As a member of Congress, there are several ways in which you can bring these consumers some much-needed relief.

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Unfortunately, the federal statute authorizing NORA expired on February 6, 2010 and Congress has yet to renew it. Now more than ever, oilheat states, businesses and consumers need this valuable program to help reduce consumption and bring to market a new generation of efficient and renewable home heating technologies. We commend you for championing the NORA Reauthorization Act (S.949). We hope for passage of at least a temporary extension of the program until Congress can act on your longer-term measure.

Congress must also address inadequacies in the federal home efficiency (Section 25C) tax credit program. For years, oilheat consumers have been left out of the credit because of deficient eligibility language for oilheat furnaces and boilers. The current program is also insufficient in that it places a \$150 cap on the installation of appliances, limits the overall credit to \$500 and does not include labor costs. Congress should renew the Section 25C tax credits, but must also eliminate the appliance caps, increase the credit to at least \$1,000, include labor costs and revise the eligibility language for oil-fired appliances.

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Thank you in advance for your consideration and support for the above policy initiatives. Together, we can bring real relief to American consumers this winter and in the years to come.

Sincerely,



Michael C. Trunzo
President & CEO

cc: Chairman of the Board Howard Peterson of Peterson Oil Service, Worcester, MA
Government Affairs Committee Chairman Thomas Devine of Devine Bioheat, Norwalk, CT
New Hampshire Vice President Dana Jones of White Mountain Oil & Propane, North Conway, NH
Oilheat Council of New Hampshire Executive Director Robert Scully



December 29, 2011

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senate
717 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RELIEF FOR AMERICANS THIS WINTER

Dear Senator Whitehouse:

Winter is upon us. Across the country, millions of Americans are turning up their thermostats to keep their families safe and warm. But at the same time they are experiencing unprecedented hardships including a depressed economy, high unemployment and volatile energy prices. As a member of Congress, there are several ways in which you can bring these consumers some much-needed relief.

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Unfortunately, the federal statute authorizing NORA expired on February 6, 2010 and Congress has yet to renew it. Now more than ever, oilheat states, businesses and consumers need this valuable program to help reduce consumption and bring to market a new generation of efficient and renewable home heating technologies. Thank you for cosponsoring the pending NORA Reauthorization Act (S.949). We hope you will urge passage of a temporary extension of the program until Congress can act on a long-term measure.

Congress must also address inadequacies in the federal home efficiency (Section 25C) tax credit program. For years, oilheat consumers have been left out of the credit because of deficient eligibility language for oilheat furnaces and boilers. The current program is also insufficient in that it places a \$150 cap on the installation of appliances, limits the overall credit to \$500 and does not include labor costs. Congress should renew the Section 25C tax credits, but must also eliminate the appliance caps, increase the credit to at least \$1,000, include labor costs and revise the eligibility language for oil-fired appliances.

Support for Energy Assistance Programs

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veterans also rely on the program. According to the National Energy Assistance Directors Association, the number of veterans being served has increased to 20%. At least 12% of the 1.8 million veterans receiving the benefit have served in Iraq or Afghanistan. Another 7% is serving active-duty personnel and their families.

While our nation faces major fiscal challenges, LIHEAP cuts affect millions of households and thousands of veterans, active-duty military and their families. We applaud you and the entire Congress for rejecting the President's proposed 50% cut to LIHEAP for fiscal year 2012. However, the current funding level of \$3.5 billion is \$1.6 billion below the amount authorized and will fail to meet the public need, especially if the economic and unemployment crises persist. Congress must fully fund the LIHEAP program for FY13.

American Energy Independence

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We are disappointed with the President's recent decision to delay the Keystone XL oil pipeline until after the 2012 election. The pipeline would transport an additional 700,000 barrels per day of North American oil from the Dakotas, Montana, Oklahoma and Canada to refineries in the Gulf Coast and then on to consumers. It would create up to 20,000 construction and manufacturing jobs and thousands more in the broader energy industry. We applaud the passage of legislation to expedite the Keystone XL pipeline. We urge continued pressure on the Obama administration to make a decision in the best interest of American energy consumers.

Energy Market Stability & Transparency

We also believe in the importance of stable, transparent and responsive energy derivative markets and insist that the prices they set be reflective of real-world supply and demand fundamentals. For this reason, NEFI was a vocal supporter of derivatives market reforms included in Title VII of last year's Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Act. Recent developments such as the collapse of MF Global highlight the need for these vital reforms. However, these market reforms are in real danger of being weakened, repealed or delayed. Congress must not allow this to happen. For this reason, we commend you for cosponsoring S.1200. Please also consider supporting S.1598, which would further strengthen new limits on energy speculation.

We are pleased Congress rejected the 15% cut to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) approved by the House last summer and applaud the \$3 billion funding increase. We urge your support for additional funding as necessary in the coming years to ensure vigorous implementation and enforcement of new trading rules. We also hope for a Senate companion to H.R.3665, which would offset CFTC funding through a fee structure identical to the one that is used to fund the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support for the above policy initiatives. Together, we can bring real relief to American consumers this winter and in the years to come.

Sincerely,



Michael C. Trunzo
President & CEO

cc: Chairman of the Board Howard Peterson of Peterson Oil Service, Worcester, MA
Government Affairs Committee Chairman Thomas Devine of Devine Bioheat, Norwalk, CT
Rhode Island Vice President Chris Brennan, Brennan Oil & Heating Co., Providence, RI
Oil Heat Institute of Rhode Island Executive Director & CEO Julie Gill



December 29, 2011

The Honorable Jack Reed
United States Senate
728 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RELIEF FOR AMERICANS THIS WINTER

Dear Senator Reed:

Winter is upon us. Across the country, millions of Americans are turning up their thermostats to keep their families safe and warm. But at the same time they are experiencing unprecedented hardships including a depressed economy, high unemployment and volatile energy prices. As a member of Congress, there are several ways in which you can bring these consumers some much-needed relief.

The New England Fuel Institute (NEFI), established in 1942, represents some 1,200 home heating fuel retailers or “dealers” and related services companies in the six New England states. These companies are small, multi-generation family owned- and operated-businesses that care deeply for their communities and customers. They are helping to meet consumers’ needs through customized delivery, payment and budget programs and many sell discounted fuel to low-income families enrolled in fuel assistance programs. When there is real need, our members will often deliver fuel without regard for a customer’s ability to pay. Heating oil providers will not leave Americans out in the cold this winter.

We invite the Congress to join us by considering the following policy initiatives:

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Unfortunately, the federal statute authorizing NORA expired on February 6, 2010 and Congress has yet to renew it. Now more than ever, oilheat states, businesses and consumers need this valuable program to help reduce consumption and bring to market a new generation of efficient and renewable home heating technologies. Thank you for continued support of the NORA Reauthorization Act (S.949) and we hope for at least a temporary extension of the program until Congress can act on a longer-term measure.

Congress must also address inadequacies in the federal home efficiency (Section 25C) tax credit program. For years, oilheat consumers have been left out of the credit because of deficient eligibility language for oilheat furnaces and boilers. The current program is also insufficient in that it places a \$150 cap on the installation of appliances, limits the overall credit to \$500 and does not include labor costs. Congress should renew the Section 25C tax credits, but must also eliminate the appliance caps, increase the credit to at least \$1,000, include labor costs and revise the eligibility language for oil-fired appliances.

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veterans also rely on the program. According to the National Energy Assistance Directors Association, the number of veterans being served has increased to 20%. At least 12% of the 1.8 million veterans receiving the benefit have served in Iraq or Afghanistan. Another 7% is serving active-duty personnel and their families.

While our nation faces major fiscal challenges, LIHEAP cuts affect millions of households and thousands of veterans, active-duty military and their families. We applaud you and the entire Congress for rejecting the President's proposed 50% cut to LIHEAP for fiscal year 2012. However, the current funding level of \$3.5 billion is \$1.6 billion below the amount authorized and will fail to meet the public need, especially if the economic and unemployment crises persist. Congress must fully fund the LIHEAP program for FY13.

American Energy Independence

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Thank you in advance for your consideration and support for the above policy initiatives. Together, we can bring real relief to American consumers this winter and in the years to come.

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Michael C. Trunzo
President & CEO

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Government Affairs Committee Chairman Thomas Devine of Devine Bioheat, Norwalk, CT
Rhode Island Vice President Chris Brennan, Brennan Oil & Heating Co., Providence, RI
Oil Heat Institute of Rhode Island Executive Director & CEO Julie Gill



December 29, 2011

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
United States Senate
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RELIEF FOR AMERICANS THIS WINTER

Dear Senator Leahy:

Winter is upon us. Across the country, millions of Americans are turning up their thermostats to keep their families safe and warm. But at the same time they are experiencing unprecedented hardships including a depressed economy, high unemployment and volatile energy prices. As a member of Congress, there are several ways in which you can bring these consumers some much-needed relief.

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We also believe in the importance of stable, transparent and responsive energy derivative markets and insist that the prices they set be reflective of real-world supply and demand fundamentals. For this reason, NEFI was a vocal supporter of derivatives market reforms included in Title VII of last year's Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Act. Recent developments such as the collapse of MF Global highlight the need for these vital reforms. However, these market reforms are in real danger of being weakened, repealed or delayed. Congress must not allow this to happen. We ask your support for new legislation (such as S.1598) designed to protect and strengthen commodity trading rules, including vital new limits on excessive speculation.

We are pleased Congress rejected the 15% cut to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) approved by the House last summer and applaud the \$3 billion funding increase. We urge your support for additional funding as necessary in the coming years to ensure vigorous implementation and enforcement of new trading rules. We also hope for a Senate companion to H.R.3665, which would offset CFTC funding through a fee structure identical to the one that is used to fund the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support for the above policy initiatives. Together, we can bring real relief to American consumers this winter and in the years to come.

Sincerely,



Michael C. Trunzo
President & CEO

cc: Chairman of the Board Howard Peterson of Peterson Oil Service, Worcester, MA
Government Affairs Committee Chairman Thomas Devine of Devine Bioheat, Norwalk, CT
Vermont Vice President Rick Fleming, Fleming Oil Co., Inc., Brattleboro, VT
Vermont Fuel Dealers Association Executive Director Matt Cota



December 29, 2011

The Honorable Bernard Sanders
United States Senate
332 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RELIEF FOR AMERICANS THIS WINTER

Dear Senator Sanders:

Winter is upon us. Across the country, millions of Americans are turning up their thermostats to keep their families safe and warm. But at the same time they are experiencing unprecedented hardships including a depressed economy, high unemployment and volatile energy prices. As a member of Congress, there are several ways in which you can bring these consumers some much-needed relief.

The New England Fuel Institute (NEFI), established in 1942, represents some 1,200 home heating fuel retailers or “dealers” and related services companies in the six New England states. These companies are small, multi-generation family owned- and operated-businesses that care deeply for their communities and customers. They are helping to meet consumers’ needs through customized delivery, payment and budget programs and many sell discounted fuel to low-income families enrolled in fuel assistance programs. When there is real need, our members will often deliver fuel without regard for a customer’s ability to pay. Heating oil providers will not leave Americans out in the cold this winter.

We invite the Congress to join us by considering the following policy initiatives:

Home Energy Efficiency & Conservation

The most immediate way to lower home heating costs is through efficiency, conservation and consumer education. For ten years, the National Oilheat Research Alliance (NORA) was instrumental in transitioning the industry to a cleaner, low-sulfur fuel that will utilize cutting-edge efficiency technologies and renewable energy such as sustainable biofuels. These efforts have already dramatically reduced fossil fuel use. NORA also offers conservation and safety programs and proper training for industry professionals, including service managers and technicians. You can find more on the benefits to your constituents at www.supportnora.org.

Unfortunately, the federal statute authorizing NORA expired on February 6, 2010 and Congress has yet to renew it. Now more than ever, oilheat states, businesses and consumers need this valuable program to help reduce consumption and bring to market a new generation of efficient and renewable home heating technologies. Thank you for cosponsoring the pending NORA Reauthorization Act (S.949). We hope you will urge passage of a temporary extension of the program until Congress can act on a long-term measure.

Congress must also address inadequacies in the federal home efficiency (Section 25C) tax credit program. For years, oilheat consumers have been left out of the credit because of deficient eligibility language for oilheat furnaces and boilers. The current program is also insufficient in that it places a \$150 cap on the installation of appliances, limits the overall credit to \$500 and does not include labor costs. Congress should renew the Section 25C tax credits, but must also eliminate the appliance caps, increase the credit to at least \$1,000, include labor costs and revise the eligibility language for oil-fired appliances.

Support for Energy Assistance Programs

For many low income families and elderly and disabled Americans, the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) offers some relief in these troubled times. Further, an increasing number of

veterans also rely on the program. According to the National Energy Assistance Directors Association, the number of veterans being served has increased to 20%. At least 12% of the 1.8 million veterans receiving the benefit have served in Iraq or Afghanistan. Another 7% is serving active-duty personnel and their families.

While our nation faces major fiscal challenges, LIHEAP cuts affect millions of households and thousands of veterans, active-duty military and their families. We applaud you and the entire Congress for rejecting the President's proposed 50% cut to LIHEAP for fiscal year 2012. However, the current funding level of \$3.5 billion is \$1.6 billion below the amount authorized and will fail to meet the public need, especially if the economic and unemployment crises persist. Congress must fully fund the LIHEAP program for FY13.

American Energy Independence

Alternative energy sources such as biofuels grow increasingly popular and have been embraced by our industry. Yet we must also acknowledge the immediate needs of American consumers who will continue to be dependent on fossil fuels for the foreseeable future. Recent crude oil discoveries within the contiguous United States, especially in North Dakota and Ohio, can put us on the path to energy independence. More than 2 million bpd of oil is immediately recoverable in proven reserves and millions more could be recovered elsewhere if prohibitions on exploration were lifted and infrastructure improved. Congress must enact a comprehensive energy policy that includes all American-made energy, including conventional fossil fuels.

We are disappointed with the President's recent decision to delay the Keystone XL oil pipeline until after the 2012 election. The pipeline would transport an additional 700,000 barrels per day of North American oil from the Dakotas, Montana, Oklahoma and Canada to refineries in the Gulf Coast and then on to consumers. It would create up to 20,000 construction and manufacturing jobs and thousands more in the broader energy industry. We applaud the passage of legislation to expedite the Keystone XL pipeline. We urge continued pressure on the Obama administration to make a decision in the best interest of American energy consumers.

Energy Market Stability & Transparency

We also believe in the importance of stable, transparent and responsive energy derivative markets and insist that the prices they set be reflective of real-world supply and demand fundamentals. For this reason, NEFI was a vocal supporter of derivatives market reforms included in Title VII of last year's Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Act. Recent developments such as the collapse of MF Global highlight the need for these vital reforms. However, these market reforms are in real danger of being weakened, repealed or delayed. Congress must not allow this to happen. We ask your support for new legislation (such as S.1598) designed to protect and strengthen commodity trading rules, including vital new limits on excessive speculation.

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