

## Larson Cosponsor Of Bill To Create Heating Oil Reserve Puts into action a two-year old study by Dept.

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WASHINGTON – Putting into action a study by the U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) and four of his Northeast Congressional colleagues are today introducing a bill to create a heating oil reserve. The study, which was completed in 1998, concluded that a home heating oil reserve located in the Northeast would provide benefits to consumers in the Northeast as well as the entire country.

Larson stated, "This report from DOE is the additional "fuel" we need to ease the frustration felt by so many people living with reduced levels, and much higher prices, of heating oil. This bill recognizes the necessary, but time consuming process involved in refining crude oil into heating oil, and therefore establishes a home heating oil reserve in the Northeast."

Larson also stated that he hopes the Congressional calendar will allow him to participate in the meeting that U.S. Energy Secretary Bill Richardson will hold in Boston on February 16, with various representatives of the oil industry to talk about the current home heating oil prices.

Under the bill, two million barrels of heating oil would be stored in leased storage facilities in the New York Harbor area, and 4.7 million would be stored in one of the four existing Strategic Petroleum Reserve caverns in the Gulf Coast. The bill directs the Secretary of Energy to create a fuel oil reserve containing a total of 6.7 million barrels of heating oil. The Secretary would have the ability to fill this heating oil reserve by trading crude oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve for heating oil.

Once in place, the President would have the authority to immediately release home heating oil to the Northeast when fuel prices in the United States rise sharply, due to a fuel oil shortage, or period of extreme winter weather. The bill authorizes a total of \$125 million to the Secretary of Energy for the period encompassing FY2000-2019 for the purpose of carrying out this act.

Today's bill will reinforce legislation Larson introduced on January 27, which gives the Administration greater authority to release oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) to counter unfair foreign oil price manipulation. Larson wrote to House Commerce Committee leaders in December to encourage the Committee to consider his SPR legislation.

Co-sponsoring the Home Heating Oil Price Stability Act with Larson are Rep. Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Rep. Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY), Rep. Nancy Johnson (R-CT), and Rep. Sam Gejdenson (D-CT).

A copy of the Report to Congress on the Feasibility of Establishing a Heating Oil Component to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve can be accessed on the Internet at [http://www.fe.doe.gov/spr/spr\\_rppr\\_intro.html](http://www.fe.doe.gov/spr/spr_rppr_intro.html)

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