

Connecticut delegation calls on president bush to ease area home heating woes

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WASHINGTON, DC -- This afternoon, members of the Connecticut Delegation sent a letter to President George W. Bush calling on him to ease the burden of record high home heating oil prices on New England. The combination of cold weather and rising oil prices means many Connecticut families will have real trouble making ends meet this winter. The letter requests that the President release oil from the Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve (NEHHOR) and make contingency funding available from the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

The delegation believes that the White House has the ability and the duty to reduce this strain on middle and lower income families in Connecticut and across the country.

The Northeast is particularly vulnerable to fuel shortages and price spikes during the winter. The Energy Information Administration projects that residential heating oil prices could average \$3.23 per gallon this season. With half of Connecticut's households relying on oil to heat their homes, this would have a huge economic impact on the region. There are more than 2,000 barrels of oil sitting in the Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve. With these sorts of resources on hand, it is more than possible for the White House to keep high prices from delivering a major blow to the area.

Senator Joseph Lieberman (CT-ID) said:

"The strain on the Northeast from the rising cost of home heating oil is real and needs a real response. Our constituents are hurting and too many Connecticut families are faced with painful choices between food and heat. I hope the President will take a step to ease this pain by releasing additional reserves and funding."

Congressman John B. Larson CT-01, Vice Chair of the Democratic Caucus, said:

"Heating your home is not a luxury in this country; it is something every American should be able to do. I urge the President to take the steps necessary to keep the Northeast warm this winter. He must release available reserves and make more funding available for our low-income residents. The President may be frozen in indifference to the needs of our citizens, but Connecticut families should not suffer because of it."

Congresswoman Rosa L. DeLauro CT-03, said:

With freezing temperatures in Connecticut, along with much of the Northeast and spiking increases in oil costs, families are in a precarious position. The President, however, can alleviate some of the pressure. I urge the President to heed our request to provide

families with relief and release oil from the Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve (NEHHOR), as well as the available contingency funding from the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)."

Congressman Chris Murphy CT-05, said:

"Families in Connecticut, and across the Northeast, shouldn't have to choose between heat and other essentials. The President has the ability to help those in need, and he should do so as soon as possible as the winter freeze won't be letting up for months in Connecticut."

Congressman Joe Courtney CT-02, said:

"The President must understand the plight of Connecticut's families who are struggling with the burdensome costs of home heating fuel. We should never play politics with people's lives, so I urge President Bush to show compassion to those who are in need during what has so far been a very cold and snowy winter in Connecticut and all of New England."

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