



February 28, 2014

Congressman Bill Schuster, Chairman
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Schuster:

We commend you for the introduction of the Home Heating Emergency Assistance through Transportation or "HHEATT" Act (H.R.4076) and are writing to endorse this important legislation.

The New England Fuel Institute (NEFI) is the nation's largest independent trade association representing the retail home heating oil industry. Our membership includes more than 1,000 mostly small business home heating oil and Bioheat® dealers and related services companies. Many NEFI members also deliver propane and other home heating fuels and retain nearly around-the-clock drivers and service technicians ready to make emergency fuel deliveries or service home heating systems in the event of an outage.

The severely inclement weather we have experienced this winter has resulted in high residential consumption rates for heating oil. As a result, heating oil dealers are increasingly challenged to resupply customer tanks without interruption and have been in need of waivers from certain regulations such as federal hours-of-service requirements. Emergency declarations issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) help to provide this relief so that heating fuel distributors can move product to where it is needed and expedite deliveries to homes and businesses.

Unfortunately, these declarations are limited to 30 days. This can create uncertainty during extended emergencies such as the long stretch of extreme cold and snowy weather we are currently experiencing. The HHEATT Act would provide added relief and certainty by guaranteeing an extension of emergency declarations through May 31, 2014. The U.S. Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with state Governors, may terminate the guaranteed extension before May 31st only if current emergencies subside.

This bill would provide much needed relief to our member companies and their consumers. We hope for its immediate passage and enactment. Again, thank you for your hard work in this regard.

Sincerely,

Michael C. Trunzo
President & CEO