



**Comments of Jim O'Reilly, Director of Public Policy
Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships (NEEP)
To the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
H. 7261
March 14, 2012**

Chairperson Handy, Vice Chairperson Walsh and members of the Committee: on behalf of Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships (NEEP)¹, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on H. 7261, the Rhode Island Petroleum Savings and Independence Advisory Commission Act.

NEEP is a regional nonprofit organization that works to accelerate the efficient use of energy in homes, buildings and industry in the Northeast. We are committed to this work because saving energy creates a stronger economy, a cleaner environment and a more reliable and affordable energy system.

NEEP writes today in support of the creation of the proposed Rhode Island Savings and Independence Advisory Commission. We particularly applaud the legislation for acknowledging the importance of energy efficiency programs for homes that heat with oil and propane. A comprehensive, all-fuels approach to energy efficiency in buildings is a central tenant of NEEP's work. With almost forty percent of Rhode Island homes heating with oil, extending the state's innovative energy efficiency programs to these customers is critical to helping residents save energy and increase comfort while making progress on broader economic and environmental goals. Estimates have found that every dollar invested in efficiency measures for oil and propane heated homes generates \$7 to \$9 in savings and keeps dollars spent on energy in Rhode Island rather than to out of state energy suppliers.²

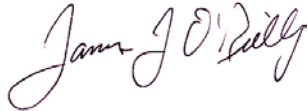
This legislation can help form the basis for providing deliverable fuels customers with greater access to existing efficiency programs and for accelerating comprehensive, whole building approaches to saving energy in buildings. The Commission also rightly includes representation from the Energy Efficiency and Resource Management Council (EERMC) and we encourage the Commission to consult the EERMC on any recommendations regarding energy efficiency programs within the planned report.

Again, we thank the committee for your many good efforts to keep Rhode Island a regional and national leader in energy and environmental policy, and thank you for the opportunity to provide our perspective

¹ These comments are offered by NEEP staff and do not necessarily represent the view of the NEEP Board of Directors, sponsors or partners.

² See Environment Northeast, "Rhode Island Home Heating Facts: Costs, Economics, and Environmental Choices," February 9, 2012, http://www.env-ne.org/public/resources/pdf/ENE_Rhode_Island_Heating_Facts.pdf.

on H. 7261. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions regarding this testimony or other matters related to energy efficiency policies in Rhode Island and throughout the Northeast region.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James J. O'Reilly".

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