



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Senator Young Fights Against New York City Cold Shoulder to Upstate Homeowners

CATHARINE YOUNG June 17, 2010

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ALBANY - New York City-controlled Senators have forced through legislation that will likely create a dangerous shortage in the supply of home heating oil for Upstate communities and cause home heating costs to rise drastically this winter for rural customers, according to Senator Catharine Young (R,I,C – Olean).

“We are in an economic crisis, and people are hurting in Upstate New York; they can’t afford to pay their bills. I am shocked that my colleagues would vote to raise home heating fuel prices and create a shortage where people who depend on home heating oil aren’t going to be able to get it. You are hurting people today,” said Senator Young.

The legislation would mandate the reduction of sulfur content of #2 heating oil. The amendment offered by Senate Republicans would have pushed the compliance date back by two years to provide adequate time for refineries to adopt the new standards and prevent a dangerous shortage in supply that would drastically increase costs for consumers.

A recent study estimated that the shortfall that will be caused if an adequate amount of time is not given to meet the new requirements would result in an increase in the price of home heating fuel by 20 to 30 cents per gallon, costing Upstate consumers \$1 billion. Consumers could be forced to pay 60 cents more during a particularly cold winter, costing the average Upstate family up to an additional \$600 to heat their home.

At the same time that they imposed a huge increase in home heating prices for Upstate consumers, Senate Democrats exempted #6 heating oil, which is primarily used in high rise apartment buildings in New York City.

The amendment offered by Senate Republicans would have mandated a reduction in sulfur content, to 500 parts per million, by July 1, 2014 which is consistent to the policy adopted in surrounding states. The legislation passed by New York City-controlled Senators mandates a reduction to 15 parts per million by July 1, 2012.

The majority of New York's home heating oil is supplied by East Coast and Gulf Coast refineries. Engineering evaluations show that it would take at least four years to install the proper infrastructure and processing capacity to meet the new mandated reductions in sulfur content.