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**Heating Oil Execs Seek Increased Energy Aid in D.C.**

*Home Heating Oil Dealers Swarm Capitol Hill, Urging Congressional Reps and Senators to Bolster Energy Aid in Stimulus Package*

January 30, 2008 (Washington D.C.) — Members of the New England Fuel Institute and the Petroleum Marketer's Association of America descended on Capitol Hill today as part of a coalition of advocates asking members of Congress to increase the amount of money set aside for home heating assistance this year.

"We're going to Washington D.C. tomorrow because the economic stimulus package that President Bush has proposed represents an extraordinary opportunity to increase the funding in the energy assistance program," Shane Sweet, executive vice president of the New England Fuel Institute, said. "Our members will be meeting with congressional representatives to make the case for the increase."

Sweet said that NEFI members from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, New York and New Jersey will be meeting with their respective Congressional delegations to advocate for increased LIHEAP funding.

In a bipartisan letter to the Senate leadership, Sweet said, 37 Senators have urged the inclusion of \$3.62 billion in supplemental funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) in that chamber's economic stimulus package, now being hammered out behind closed doors. If the supplemental funding is included, it would bring the total LIHEAP funding for the current fiscal year (2008) to \$5.1 billion, plus an additional \$500 million in contingency funds.

Sweet said that the two organizations have a long history of supporting LIHEAP at the federal and state level, and that they have worked to fully fund the program at \$5.1 billion for two years now.

Many American families and small businesses are struggling with the burden of high energy prices, Sweet said, costs are at historic highs. LIHEAP is a key element in the safety net protecting tens of thousands of America's most vulnerable citizens — the elderly, the disabled, and young children, he said.

"No one should have to choose between putting food on the table or staying warm," Sweet said. "The president and Congress have the chance to make life better for a lot of folks with this economic stimulus package, and we're here to urge them to make the right decision."

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