

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 19, 2008

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader Boehner, Chairman Rangel and Ranking Member McCrery:

We respectfully request that any additional economic stimulus package or supplemental appropriations bill include measures to help middle class families weather the impending winter heating crisis.

We recognize that summer has just ended and most people are not thinking of freezing temperatures and a long winter ahead. However, the winter heating season is just weeks away for some northern states and early signs point to an impending crisis. More than 14.6 million households in the U.S. use either heating oil or propane as their primary heat source. Heating oil prices have increased more than 100 percent over last year's levels. Propane prices are up almost 80 percent. Natural gas costs have also seen significant increases.

The average family using oil to heat their home could be paying as much as \$5,000 this winter. (Nearly 10 percent of the median household income in the U.S.: \$50,233 in 2007.) Additionally, many of these families are still paying off bills from last year's record heating fuel prices. Coupled with soaring costs for gasoline, food, and other essentials, people are worried they may have to choose between heating their homes and feeding their families.

Crisis is not an overstatement: Northern Governors are preparing winter shelters, and local towns and cities are raising money to help seniors and the poor make it through the winter. In recent months, our constituents have written us telling of their plans to shut off rooms or entire floors in their homes or to take in family members or elderly neighbors. Never before have we seen people worry about a winter heating season so early in the year.

Skyrocketing winter heating prices are not just a humanitarian crisis, they are a major economic crisis as well. The rise in the cost of winter heating fuel could cripple the economy in cold weather states as families and businesses struggle to afford energy costs.

We respectfully request that you include a \$1,000 refundable tax credit for individual taxpayers (\$2,000 for joint filers) towards the price of home heating oil, propane, or natural gas for the 2008 tax year. We ask that this credit be available for individuals with an adjusted gross income of less than \$100,000, or \$200,000 for taxpayers filing jointly.

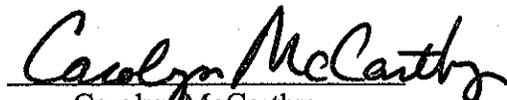
We feel strongly that immediate action is necessary to address this looming crisis.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Tom Allen  
Member of Congress



Carolyn McCarthy  
Member of Congress

Chaff Skye

Tim Holden

Niki Bongas

Tammy Baldwin

Edward J. Markey

Chris Carahan

Alug Sin

Carol Shea-Porter

Bill Pascrell Jr

Walter Dindo

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Michael R. Murphy

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Joe Courtney

Steph Fyfe

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## **Signatories**

Rep. Thomas Allen  
Rep. Michael Arcuri  
Rep. Tammy Baldwin  
Rep. Robert Brady  
Rep. Russ Carnahan  
Rep. Christopher Carney  
Rep. Joe Courtney  
Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand  
Rep. Maurice Hinchey  
Rep. Paul Hodes  
Rep. Tim Holden  
Rep. Steve Israel  
Rep. Patrick Kennedy  
Rep. Stephen Lynch  
Rep. Carolyn McCarthy  
Rep. Michael McNulty  
Rep. Carolyn Maloney  
Rep. Edward Markey  
Rep. Michael Michaud  
Rep. William Pascrell  
Rep. Tim Ryan  
Rep. Christopher Shays  
Rep. Carol Shea-Porter  
Rep. Albio Sires  
Rep. Betty Sutton  
Rep. Niki Tsongas  
Rep. Charles Wilson